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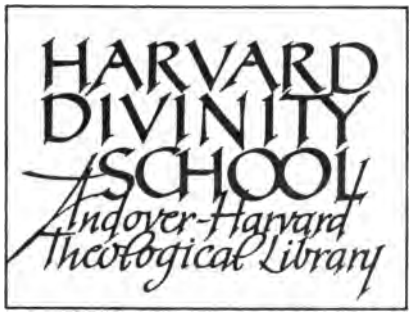
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THE

WHOLE WORKS

OF

THE RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE:

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

AND

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF HIS WRITINGS,

BY

REGINALD HEBER, A.M.

CANON OF ST. ASAPH, RECTOR OF HODNET, AND LATE FELLOW OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART II.

BEGINNING AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST MIRACLE, UNTIL THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING.

DISCOURSE X.

A Discourse upon that Part of the Decalogue, which the Holy Jesus adopted into the Institution and Obligation of Christianity.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus had described the characterisms of Christianity, in these eight graces and beatitudes, he adds his injunctions, that in these virtues they should be eminent and exemplar, that they might adorn the doctrine of God; for he intended that the Gospel should be as leaven in a lump of dough, to season the whole mass; and that Christians should be the instruments of communicating the excellence and reputation of this holy institution to all the world. Therefore, Christ calls them salt, and light; and the societies of Christians, "a city set upon a hill," and "a light set in a candlestick," whose office and energy is to illuminate all the vicinage; which is also expressed in these preceptive words: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven;" which I consider not only as a circumstance of other parts, but as a precise duty itself, and one of the sanctions of Christianity;

which hath so confederated the souls of the disciples of the institution, that it hath in some proportion obliged every man to take care of his brother's soul[a]. And since reverence to God, and charity to our brother, are the two greatest ends which the best laws can have, this precept of exemplary living is enjoined in order to them both: we must "shine as lights in the world," that God may be glorified, and our brother edified; that the excellency of the act may endear the reputation of the religion, and invite men to confess God, according to the sanctions of so holy an institution. And if we be curious that vanity do not mingle in the intention, and that the intention do not spoil the action, and that we suffer not our lights to shine, that men may magnify us, and not glorify God; this duty is soon performed, by way of adherence to our other actions, and hath no other difficulty in it, but that it will require our prudence and care, to preserve the simplicity of our purposes, and humility of our spirit, in the midst of that excellent reputation, which will certainly be consequent to a holy and exemplary life.

2. But, since the holy Jesus had set us up to be lights in the world, he took care we should not be stars of the least magnitude, but eminent, and such as might, by their great emissions of light, give evidence of their being immediately derivative from the Sun of Righteousness. He was now giving his law; and meant to retain so much of Moses, as Moses had of natural and essential justice and charity, and superadd many degrees of his own; that as far as Moses was exceeded by Christ in the capacity of a lawgiver, so far Christianity might be more excellent and holy than the Mosaical sanctions. And, therefore, as a preface to the Christian law, the holy Jesus declares, that "unless our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," that is, of the stricter sects of the Mosaical institution, "we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Which not only relates to the prevaricating practices of the Pharisees, but even to their doctrines and commentaries upon the law of Moses, as appears evidently in the following instances. For if all the excellence of Christianity had consisted in the mere

[a] Ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχὴ, τοῦτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κόσμῳ Χριστιανοί. — *Just. Mart.* Sic S. Paulus, ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ. — *Phil.* ii. 15.

command of sincerity, and prohibition of hypocrisy, it had nothing in it proportionable to those excellent promises and clearest revelations of eternity there expressed; nor of a fit employment for the designation of a special and a new Law-giver, whose laws were to last for ever, and were established upon foundations stronger than the pillars of heaven and earth.

3. But St. Paul, calling the law of Moses, "a law of works[b]," did well insinuate what the doctrine of the Jews was, concerning the degrees and obligations of justice: for besides that it was a law of works, in opposition to the law of faith, (and so the sense of it is formerly explicated[c],) it is also a law of works, in opposition to the law of the Spirit; and it is understood to be such a law, which required the exterior obedience; such a law, according to which St. Paul so lived, that no man could reprove him; that is, the judges could not tax him with prevarication; such a law, which, being in very many degrees carnal and material, did not with much severity exact the intention and purposes spiritual. But the Gospel is "the law of the Spirit." If they failed in the exterior work, it was accounted to them for sin; but to Christians nothing becomes a sin, but a failing and prevaricating spirit. For the outward act is such an emanation of the interior, that it enters into the account, for the relation's sake, and for its parent. When God hath put a duty into our hands, if our spirits be right, the work will certainly follow; but the following work receives its acceptation, not from the value the Christian law hath precisely put upon it, but because the spirit from whence it came hath observed its rule. The law of charity is acted and expressed in works, but hath its estimate from the spirit. Which discourse is to be understood in a limited and qualified signification. For then also God required the heart, and interdicted the very concupiscences of our irregular passions, at least in some instances; but because much of their law consisted in the exterior, and the law appointed not, nor yet intimated any penalty to evil thoughts, and because the expiation of such interior irregularities was easy, implicit, and involved in their daily sacrifices, without special trouble; therefore the old law

[b] Rom. iii. 27. [c] Vide Considerat. of Christ's first Preaching, n. 3.

was "a law of works," that is, especially and in its first intention. But this being less perfect, the holy Jesus inverted the order. 1. For very little of Christianity stands upon the outward action; (Christ having appointed but two sacraments immediately:) and, 2. a greater restraint is laid upon the passions, desires, and first motions of the Spirit, than under the severity of Moses: and, 3. they are threatened with the same curses of a sad eternity, with the acts proceeding from them: and, 4. because the obedience of the spirit does in many things excuse the want of the outward act, God always requiring at our hands what he hath put in our power, and no more: and, 5. lastly, because the spirit is the principle of all actions[d], moral and spiritual, and certainly productive of them, when they are not impeded from without; therefore the holy Jesus hath secured the fountain, as knowing that the current must needs be healthful and pure, if it proceeds through pure channels, from a limpid and unpolluted principle.

4. And, certainly, it is much for the glory of God, to worship him with a religion, whose very design looks upon God as "the Searcher of our hearts" and Lord of our spirits; who judges the purposes as a God, and does not only take his estimate from the outward action as a man. And it is also a great reputation to the institution itself, that it purifies the soul, and secures the secret cogitations of the mind. It punishes covetousness, as it judges rapine; it condemns a sacrilegious heart[e], as soon as an irreligious hand; it detests hating of our brother, by the same aversation which it expresses against doing him affronts. He that curses in his heart, shall die the death of an explicit and bold blasphemer; murmuring and repining is against the laws of Christianity; but either by the remissness of Moses's law, or the gentler execution of it, or the innovating or lessening glosses of the Pharisees, he was esteemed innocent whose actions were according to the letter, not whose spirit was conformed to

[d] Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν δίκαιος, ἀλλ' εἶναι, θέλει,
Βαθεῖαν ἄλκα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενος,
Ἀφ' ἧς τὰ κεδνὰ βλαστάνει βουλεύματα.
Amphiar. apud Æschyl. Sept. con. Theb. 589.

[e] Josephus reprehendit Polybium, quòd mortem Antiochi inflictam dixit ob cogitatum scelus sacrilegii, putans pœnam non irrogari nisi ob perpetratum facinus: τὸ γὰρ μηκέτι ποιῆσαι τὸ ἔργον βουλευσάμενον, οὐκ ἦν τιμωρίας ἄξιον.

the intention and more secret sanctity of the law. So that our righteousness must therefore exceed the Pharisaical standard, because our spirits must be pure as our hands, and the heart as regular as the action; our purposes must be sanctified, and our thoughts holy; we must love our neighbour as well as relieve him, and choose justice with adhesion of the mind, as well as carry her upon the palms of our hands. And, therefore, the prophets, foretelling the kingdom of the Gospel, and the state of this religion, call it "a writing the laws of God in our hearts." And St. Paul distinguishes the Gospel from the law, by this only measure: We are all Israelites, of the seed of Abraham, heirs of the same inheritance; only now we are not to be accounted Jews, for the outward conformity to the law, but for the inward consent and obedience to those purities, which were secretly signified by the types of Moses. They of the law were "Jews outwardly;" their "circumcision was outward in the flesh," their "praise was of men[f]:" we are "Jews inwardly;" our "circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, and our praise is of God;" that is, we are not judged by the outward act, but by the mind and the intention; and though the acts must follow in all instances where we can, and where they are required, yet it is the less principal, and rather significative, than by its own strength and energy operative, and accepted.

5. St. Clement of Alexandria saith, the Pharisees' righteousness consisted in the not doing evil[g]; and that Christ superadded this also, that we must do the contrary good, and so exceed the Pharisaical measure. They would not wrong a Jew, nor many times relieve him; they reckoned their innocence by not giving offence, by walking blameless, by not being accused before the judges sitting in the gates of their cities. But the balance, in which the Judge of quick and dead weighs Christians, is, not only the avoiding evil, but doing good; the "following peace with all men, and holiness;" the proceeding "from faith to faith;" the "adding virtue to virtue;" the persevering "in all holy conversation

[f] Rom. ii. 28, 29.

[g] Virtus est vitio caruisse ———
Optimus est qui minimis urgetur.

and godliness." And, therefore, St. Paul[h], commending the grace of universal charity, says, that "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law;" implying, that the prime intention of the law was, that every man's right be secured, that no man receive wrong. And, indeed, all the decalogue consisting of prohibitions rather than precepts, saving that each table hath one positive commandment, does not obscurely verify the doctrine of St. Clement's interpretation. Now, because the Christian charity abstains from doing all injury, therefore it is the fulfilling of the law: but because it is also patient and liberal, that it suffers long, and is kind; therefore the charity commanded in Christ's law, exceeds that charity which the Scribes and Pharisees reckoned as part of their righteousness. But Jesus himself does, with great care in the particulars, instance in what he would have the disciples to be eminent, above the most strict sect of the Jewish religion. 1. In practising the moral precepts of the decalogue, with a stricter interpretation; 2. and in quitting the permissions and licenses, which, for the hardness of their heart, Moses gave them, as indulgences to their persons, and securities against the contempt of too severe laws.

6. The severity of exposition was added but to three commandments, and in three indulgences the permission was taken away. But, because our great Lawgiver repeated also other parts of the decalogue in his after-sermons[i], I will represent, in this one view, all that he made to be Christian by adoption.

The First Commandment.

7. The first commandment Christ often repeated and enforced, as being the basis of all religion, and the first endearment of all that relation, whereby we are capable of being the sons of God; as being the great commandment of the law, and comprehensive of all that duty we owe to God, in the relations of the virtue of religion: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord;" and, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and

[h] Rom. xiii. 10.
[i] Luke, xviii. 20. Mark, x. 19. Matt. xix. 18. Rom. xiii. 9.

with all thy mind, and with all thy strength[k]." This is the first commandment; that is, this comprehends all that which is moral and eternal in the first table of the decalogue.

8. The duties of this commandment are: 1. To worship God alone, with actions proper to him; and, 2. to love, and, 3. obey him with all our faculties. 1. Concerning worship. The actions proper to the honour of God are, to offer sacrifice, incense, and oblations; making vows to him, swearing by his name as the instrument of secret testimony, confessing his incommunicable attributes, and praying to him for those graces which are essentially annexed to his dispensation; as remission of sins, gifts of the Spirit, and the grace of sanctification, and life eternal. Other acts of religion, such as are uncovering the head, bowing the knee, falling upon our face, stooping to the ground, reciting praises, are, by the consent of nations, used as testimonies of civil or religious veneration, and do not always pass for confessions of a Divinity; and, therefore, may be, without sin, used to angels, or kings, or governors, or to persons in any sense more excellent than ourselves, provided they be intended to express an excellency no greater than is proper to their dignities and persons; not in any sense given to an idol, or false gods. But the first sort are such, which all the world hath consented to be actions of Divine and incommunicable adoration; and such which God also, in several religions, hath reserved as his own appropriate regalities; and are idolatry, if given to any angel or man.

9. The next duties are: 2. Love; 3. and obedience; but they are united in the Gospel: "This is love, that we keep his commandments." And since we are, for God's sake, bound also to love others, this love is appropriate to God by the extension of parts, and the intension of degrees. The extension signifies, that we must serve God with all our faculties; for all division of parts is hypocrisy, and a direct prevarication: our heart must think what our tongue speaks, our hands act, what we promise or purpose; and God's enemies must have no share, so much as in appearance or dissimulation. Now no creature can challenge this; and if we do justice to our neighbour, though unwillingly, we have

[k] Matt. xxii. 37. Mark, xii. 30. Luke, x. 27.

done him no injury; for in that case he only who sees the irregularity of our thoughts, is the person injured. And when we swear to him, our heart must swear as well as our tongue, and our hands must pay what our lips have promised; or else we provoke him with an imperfect sacrifice: we love him not with all our mind, with all our strength, and all our faculties.

10. But the difficulty and question of this commandment lies in the intention. For it is not enough to serve God with every capacity, passion, and faculty; but it must be every degree of every faculty, all the latitude of our will, all the whole intention of our passions, all the possibility and energy of our senses and our understanding: which, because it is to be understood according to that moderate sentence and account which God requires of us, set in the midst of such a condition, so attended, and depressed, and prejudiced, the full sense of it I shall express in several propositions.

11. First: The intention of the love to which we are obliged, requires not the degree which is absolutely the greatest, and simply the most perfect. For there are degrees of grace, every one of which is pleasing to God, and is a state of reconciliation and atonement: and he that "breaks not the bruised reed," nor "quenches the smoking flax," loves to cherish those endeavours which, beginning from small principles, pass through the variety of degrees, and give demonstration, that though it be our duty to contend for the best, yet this contention is with an enemy; and that enemy makes an abatement; and that abatement being an imperfection, rather than a sin, is actually consistent with the state of grace, the endeavour being in our power, and not the success; the perfection is that which shall be our reward, and therefore is not our present duty. And, indeed, if to do the best action, and to love God as we shall do in heaven, were a present obligation, it would have been clearly taught us, what is simply the best action; whereas now, that which is of itself better, in certain circumstances is less perfect, and sometimes not lawful; and concerning those circumstances, we have no rules, nor any guide but prudence and probable inducements: so that it is certain, in our best endeavours we should only increase our scruples, instead of doing actions of the highest perfections; we should erect a tyranny over our

consciences, and no augmentation of any thing but the trouble. And, therefore, in the law of Moses, when this commandment was given in the same words, yet that the sense of it might be clear, the analogy of the law declared that their duty had a latitude, and that God was not so strict a task-master, but that he left many instances of piety to the voluntary devotion of his servants, that they might receive the reward of "free-will offerings." But if these words had obliged them to the greatest degree, that is, to all the degrees of our capacities in every instance, every act of religion had been duty and necessity.

12. And thus also it was in the Gospel. Ananias and Sapphira were killed, by sentence from Heaven, for not performing what was in their power at first not to have promised; but because they brought an obligation upon themselves which God brought not, and then prevaricated, they paid the forfeiture of their lives. St. Paul took no wages of the Corinthian churches, but wrought night and day with his own hand[l]; but himself says he had power to do otherwise. "There was laid upon him a necessity to preach," but no necessity to preach without wages and support. There is a good and a better in virginity and marriage; and yet there is no command in either, but that we abstain from sin: we are left to our own election for the particular, having "no necessity, but power in our will[m]." David prayed "seven times a day," and Daniel prayed "three times;" and both were beloved of God. The Christian masters were not bound to manumit their slaves, and yet were commended if they did so. Sometimes the Christians fled in persecution; St. Paul did so, and St. Peter did so, and St. Cyprian did so, and St. Athanasius, and many more: but time was, when some of these also chose to suffer death rather than to fly. And if to fly be a permission, and no duty, there is certainly a difference of degrees in the choice; to fly is not so great a suffering as to die, and yet a man may innocently choose the easier. And our blessed Lord himself, who never failed of any degree of his obligations, yet at some time prayed with more zeal and fervour than at other times, as a little before his passion. Since, then, at all

[l] 2 Cor. xi. 7, 8. [m] 1 Cor. vii. 37.

times he did not do actions of that degree which is absolutely the greatest; it is evident that God's goodness is so great, as to be content with such a love which parts no share between him and sin; and leaves all the rest under such a liberty, as is only encouraged by those extraordinary rewards and crowns proportioned to heroical endeavours. It was a pretty question, which was moved in the solitudes of Nitria, concerning two religious brothers[n]; the one gave all his goods to the poor at once, the other kept the inheritance, and gave all the revenue. None of all the fathers knew which was absolutely the better; at once to renounce all, or, by repetition of charitable acts, to divide it into portions: one act of charity in an heroical degree, or an habitual charity in the degree of virtue. This instance is probation enough, that the opinion of such a necessity of doing the best action, simply and indefinitely, is impossible to be safely acted, because it is impossible to be understood. Two talents shall be rewarded, and so shall five, both in their proportions: "he that sows sparingly shall reap sparingly," but he shall reap: "every man as he purposes in his heart, so let him give." The best action shall have the best reward; and though he is the happiest who rises highest, yet he is not safest that enters into the state of disproportion to his person. I find, in the lives of the later reputed saints, that St. Teresa à Jesu made a vow to do every thing which she should judge to be the best[o]. I will not judge the person, nor censure the action, because possibly her intention and desires were of greatest sanctity; but whosoever considers the story of her life, and the strange repugnancies in the life of man to such undertakings, must needs fear to imitate an action of such danger and singularity. The advice which, in this case, is safest to be followed, is, that we employ our greatest industry, that we fall not into sin, and actions of forbidden nature; and then strive, by parts and steps, and with much wariness, in attempering our zeal, to superadd degrees of eminence, and observation of the more perfect instances of sanctity; that, doing some excellences which God hath not commanded, he may be the rather moved to

[n] Histor. Lansid.

[o] Πᾶν τὸ βέλτιστον φαινόμενον ἴστω σοι νόμος ἀπαραβάτος. — *Epict.* c. 75.

pardon our prevaricating so many parts of our necessary duty. If love transport us, and carry us to actions sublime and heroical, let us follow so good a guide, and pass on with diligence, and zeal, and prudence, as far as love will carry us[p]: but let us not be carried to actions of great eminence, and strictness, and unequal severities, by scruple and pretence of duty; lest we charge our miscarriages upon God, and call the yoke of the Gospel insupportable, and Christ a hard task-master. But we shall pass from virtue to virtue with more safety, if a spiritual guide take us by the hand; only remembering, that if the angels themselves, and the beatified souls, do now, and shall hereafter, differ in degrees of love and glory, it is impossible the state of imperfection should be confined to the highest love, and the greatest degree, and such as admits no variety, no increment, or difference of parts and stations.

13. Secondly: Our love to God consists not in any one determinate degree, but hath such a latitude as best agrees with the condition of men, who are of variable natures, different affections and capacities, changeable abilities, and which receive their heightenings and declensions according to a thousand accidents of mortality. For when a law is regularly prescribed to persons, whose varieties and different constitutions cannot be regular or uniform, it is certain God gives a great latitude of performance, and binds not to just atoms and points. The laws of God are like universal objects, received into the faculty, partly by choice, partly by nature; but the variety of perfection is by the variety of the instruments, and disposition of the recipient, and are excelled by each other in several senses, and by themselves at several times. And so is the practice of our obedience, and the entertainments of the Divine commandments: for some are of malleable natures, others are morose; some are of healthful and temperate constitutions, others are lustful, full of fancy, full of appetite; some have excellent leisure and opportunities of retirement, others are busy in an active life, and cannot, with advantages, attend to the choice of the better part; some are peaceable and timorous, and some are in all instances serene; others are of tumultuous and unquiet

[p] κἂν τῷ δικαίῳ γὰρ μεῖζον' ἔξεστι φρονεῖν. — *Sophoc. Ajac.*

spirits: and these become opportunities of temptation on one side, and on the other occasions of a virtue: but every change of faculty and variety of circumstance hath influence upon morality; and, therefore, their duties are personally altered, and increase in obligation, or are slackened by necessities, according to the infinite alteration of exterior accidents, and interior possibilities.

14. Thirdly: Our love to God must be totally exclusive of any affection to sin, and engage us upon a great, assiduous, and laborious care, to resist all temptations, to subdue sin, to acquire the habits of virtues, and live holily; as it is already expressed in the discourse of repentance. We must prefer God as the object of our hopes, we must choose to obey him rather than man, to please him rather than satisfy ourselves, and we must do violence to our strongest passions, when they once contest against a Divine commandment. If our passions are thus regulated, let them be fixed upon any lawful object whatsoever, if, at the same time, we prefer heaven and heavenly things, that is, would rather choose to lose our temporal love than our eternal hopes, (which we can best discern by our refusing to sin upon the solicitation or engagement of the temporal object;) then, although we feel the transportation of a sensual love towards a wife, or child, or friend, actually more pungent and sensible than passions of religion are, they are less perfect, but they are not criminal. Our love to God requires that we do his commandments, and that we do not sin; but in other things we are permitted, in the condition of our nature, to be more sensitively moved by visible than by invisible and spiritual objects. Only this; we must ever have a disposition and a mind prepared to quit our sensitive and pleasant objects, rather than quit a grace, or commit a sin. Every act of sin is against the love of God, and every man does many single actions of hostility and provocation against him; but the state of the love of God is that which we actually call the state of grace. When Christ reigns in us, and sin does not reign, but the spirit is quickened, and the lusts are mortified; when we are habitually virtuous, and do acts of piety, temperance, and justice, frequently, easily, cheerfully, and with a successive, constant, moral, and humane industry, according to the talent which God hath entrusted to us in the banks

of nature and grace; then we are in the love of God, then we "love him with all our heart." But if sin grows upon us, and is committed more frequently, or gets a victory with less difficulty, or is obeyed more readily, or entertained with a freer complacency; then we love not God as he requires; we divide between him and sin, and God is not the Lord of all our faculties. But the instances of Scripture are the best exposition of this commandment: for David "followed God with all his heart, to do that which was right in his eyes [q];" and Josiah "turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might [r]." Both these kings did it; and yet there was some imperfection in David, and more violent recessions: for so saith the Scripture of Josiah, "Like unto him was there no king before him;" David was not so exact as he, and yet he "followed God with all his heart." From which these two corollaries are certainly deducible: that to love God with all our heart admits variety of degrees, and the lower degree is yet a love with all our heart; and yet to love God requires a holy life, a diligent walking in the commandments, either according to the sense of innocence or of penitence, either by first or second counsels, by the spirit of regeneration, or the spirit of renovation and restitution. The sum is this: the sense of this precept is such as may be reconciled with the infirmities of our nature, but not with a vice in our manners; with the recession of single acts, seldom done, and always disputed against, and long fought with, but not with an habitual aversation, or a ready obedience to sin, or an easy victory.

15. This commandment, being the sum of the first table, had, in Moses' law, particular instances which Christ did not insert into his institution; and he added no other particular, but that which we call the third commandment, concerning veneration and reverence to the name of God. The other two, viz. concerning images and the sabbath, have some special considerations.

The Second Commandment.

16. The Jews receive daily offence against the catechisms of some churches, who, in the recitation of the decalogue,

[q] 1 Kings, xiv. 8. [r] 2 Kings, xxiii. 25.

omit the second commandment, as supposing it to be a part of the first, according as we account them; and their offence rises higher, because they observe, that in the New Testament, where the decalogue is six times repeated, in special recitation and in summaries, there is no word prohibiting the making, retaining, or respect of images[s]. Concerning which things Christians consider, that God forbade to the Jews the very having and making images and representments, not only of the true God, or of false and imaginary deities, but of visible creatures[t], which, because it was but of temporary reason, and relative consideration of their aptness to superstition, and their conversing with idolatrous nations, was a command proper to the nation, part of their covenant, not of essential, indispensable, and eternal reason, not of that which we usually call "the law of nature." Of which also God gave testimony, because himself commanded the signs and representment of seraphim to be set upon the mercy-seat, toward which the priest and the people made their addresses in their religious adorations; and of the brazen serpent, to which they looked when they called to God for help against the sting of the venomous snakes. These instances tell us, that to make pictures or statues of creatures is not against a natural reason; and that they may have uses which are profitable, as well as be abused to danger and superstition. Now, although the nature of that people was apt to the abuse, and their intercourse with the nations in their confines was too great an invitation to entertain the danger; yet Christianity hath so far removed that danger, by the analogy and design of the religion, by clear doctrines, revelations, and infinite treasures of wisdom, and demonstrations of the Spirit, that our blessed Lawgiver thought it not necessary to remove us from superstition by a prohibition of the use of images and pictures; and, therefore, left us to the

[s] Ὁ Μωσῆς τὰς δοκίμους καὶ γλαφυρὰς τέχνας, ζωγραφίαν καὶ ἀνδριαντοποιΐαν, ἐκ τῆς κατ' αὐτὸν πολιτείας ἐξήλασε. — *Philo de Gigant.*

Vide Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. iv. 16, and vii. 5. Numb. xxxiii. 52.

[t] Imò et Ecclesia 8. Novemb. celebrat martyrium Claudii Nicostrati et sociorum, qui, cùm peritissimi fuerant statuarii, mortem potiùs ferre, quàm Gentilibus simulacra facere, maluerunt.

Ἄγαλμα οὐ κατεσκεύασε, διὰ τὸ μὴ νομίζειν ἀνθρωπόμορφον εἶναι τὸν Θεόν. — *Diodor. Sic. de Moyse.*

sense of the great commandment, and the dictates of right reason, to take care that we do not dishonour the invisible God with visible representations of what we never saw, nor cannot understand, nor yet convey any of God's incommunicable worship in the forenamed instances to any thing but himself. And for the matter of images we have no other rule left us in the New Testament; the rules of reason and nature, and the other parts of the institution, are abundantly sufficient for our security. And possibly St. Paul might relate to this, when he affirmed, concerning the fifth, that "it was the first commandment with promise." For in the second commandment to the Jews, as there was a great threatening, so also a greater promise of "showing mercy to a thousand generations." But because the body of this commandment was not transcribed into the Christian law, the first of the decalogue which we retain, and in which a promise is inserted, is the fifth commandment. And, therefore, the wisdom of the church was remarkable in the variety of sentences concerning the permission of images. At first, when they were blended in the danger and impure mixtures of Gentilism, and men were newly recovered from the snare, and had the relics of a long custom to superstitious and false worshippings, they endured no images, but merely civil: but as the danger ceased, and Christianity prevailed, they found that pictures had a natural use of good concernment, to move less knowing people by the representment and declaration of a story; and then they, knowing themselves permitted to the liberties of Christianity, and the restraints of nature and reason, and not being still weak under prejudice and childish dangers, but fortified by the excellence of a wise religion, took them into lawful uses, doing honour to saints, as unto the absent emperors, according to the custom of the empire; they erected statues to their honour, and transcribed a history, and sometimes a precept, into a table, by figures making more lasting impressions than by words and sentences. While the church stood within these limits, she had natural reason for her warrant, and the custom of the several countries, and no precept of Christ to countermand it: they who went farther were unreasonable, and, according to the degree of that excess, were superstitious.

17. The duties of this commandment are learned by the intents of it: for it was directed against the false religion

of the nations, who believed the images of their gods to be filled with the Deity; and it was also a caution, to prevent our low imaginations of God, lest we should come to think God to be like man[u]. And thus far there was indispensable and eternal reason in the precept: and this was never lessened in any thing by the holy Jesus, and obliges us Christians to make our addresses and worshippings to no god but the God of the Christians, that is, of all the world; and not to do this in or before an image of him, because he cannot be represented. For the images of Christ and his saints, they come not into either of the two considerations; and we are to understand our duty by the proportions of our reverence to God, expressed in the great commandment. Our fathers in Christianity, as I observed now, made no scruple of using the images and pictures of their princes and learned men; which the Jews understood to be forbidden to them in the commandment. Then they admitted, even in the utensils of the church, some cœlatures and engravings: such was that Tertullian speaks of, "the good shepherd in the chalice." Afterwards they admitted pictures, but not before the time of Constantine; for in the council of Eliberis they were forbidden. And in succession of time, the scruples lessened with the danger, and all the way they signified their belief to be, that this commandment was only so far retained by Christ as it relied upon natural reason, or was a particular instance of the great commandment; that is, images were forbidden, where they did dishonour God, or lessen his reputation, or estrange our duties, or became idols, or the direct matter of superstitious observances, charms, or senseless confidences; but they were permitted to represent the humanity of Christ, to remember saints and martyrs, to recount a story, to imprint a memory, to do honour and reputation to absent persons, and to be the instruments of a

[u] Τὴν ἀέρατον εἰκονογραφεῖν ἡ διαπλάττειν οὐχ ὅσιον. — *Philo de Legatione.*

Prioribus 170 annis templa quidem ædificabant [Romani,] simulacrum verò nullum effigiatum faciebant; perinde atque nefas esset meliora per deteriorum similitudines exprimere. — *Plutarch. Numa.*

Εἰ γὰρ ἓν τοῦτο μόνος θεὸς, περιέχων ἡμᾶς ἅπαντας καὶ γῆν καὶ θάλατταν, ὃ καλοῦμεν οὐρανὸν, καὶ κόσμον, καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀυτῶν φύσιν. τούτου δὴ τίς ἂν εἰκόνα πλάττειν θαῤῥήσειε, νοῦν ἔχων, ὁμοίαν τινὶ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν; ἀλλ' ἐᾷν δεῖ πᾶσαν ζοανοποιΐαν, τέμενος ἀφορίσαντας, καὶ σηκὸν ἀξιόλογον τιμᾷν εἴδους χωρίς. — *Strab.* lib. xvi.

Ὀφθαλμοῖς οὐχ ὁρᾶται, οὐδένι ἔοικεν· διόπερ αὐτὸν οὐδεὶς ἐκμαθεῖν ἐξ εἰκόνος δύναται. — *Antisth.*

relative civility and esteem. But, in this particular, infinite care is to be taken of scandal and danger, of a forward and zealous ignorance, or of a mistaking and peevish confidence; and where a society hath such persons in it, the little good of images must not be violently retained, with the greater danger and certain offence of such persons, of whom consideration is to be had in the cure of souls. I only add this, that the first Christians made no scruple of saluting the statues of their princes, and were confident it made no entrenchment upon the natural prohibition contained in this commandment; because they had observed, that exterior inclinations and addresses of the body, though in the lowest manner, were not proper to God, but in Scripture found also to be communicated to creatures, to kings, to prophets, to parents, to religious persons[x]: and because they found it to be death to do affront to the pictures and statues of their emperors, they concluded in reason, (which they also saw verified by the practice and opinion of all the world,) that the respect they did at the emperor's statue was accepted as a veneration to his person. But these things are but sparingly to be drawn into religion, because the customs of this world are altered, and their opinions new; and many, who have not weak understandings, have weak consciences; and the necessity for the entertainment of them is not so great as the offence is, or may be.

The Third Commandment.

18. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain[y]." This our blessed Saviour repeating, expresses it thus: "It hath been said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself;" to which Christ adds, out of Num. xxx. 2. "But thou shalt perform thy oaths unto the Lord." The

[x] Gen. xxiii. 12; xxvii. 29; xlii. 6; and xlviii. 12. 1 Sam. xx. 41. 1 Kings, i. 16.

[y] Apud Romanos sancitum est, ut si per Deum jurans quis pejeraret, ad Deum ipsum plectendus remitteretur, quem satis esse idoneum suæ majestatis vindicem dicebant.—*L. Jurisjurandi, C. de Rebus Credit. et Jurejur.*

Sin per genium principis quis jurans pejerâsset, castigabatur fustibus, cum hoc elogio, Temerè ne jura.—*Si duo Patroni, Sect. fin. de Jurejur.*

Lysander dixit homines uti posse pro suo commodo juramentis, sicut pueri astragalis.—*Plutarch. in Lysand.*

Idem in Æmylio ait, Macedonas usos esse juramento uti moneta.

meaning of the one we are taught by the other. We must not invocate the name of God in any promise in vain, that is, with a lie: which happens either out of levity, that we change our purpose, which at first we really intended; or when our intention at that instant was fallacious, and contradictory to the undertaking. This is to "take the name of God," that is, to use it, to take it into our mouths, for vanity; that is, according to the perpetual style of Scripture, for a lie. "Every one hath spoken vanity to his neighbour[z]," that is, he hath lied unto him; for so it follows, "with flattering lips, and with a double heart:" and "swearing deceitfully" is by the Psalmist called "lifting up his soul unto vanity[a]." And Philo the Jew[b], who well understood the law and the language of his nation, renders the sense of this commandment to be, "to call God to witness to a lie." And this is to be understood only in promises, for so Christ explains it, by the appendix out of the law, "Thou shalt perform thy oaths:" for lying in judgment, which is also with an oath, or taking God's name for witness, is forbidden in the ninth commandment. To this Christ added a farther restraint. For whereas, by the natural law, it was not unlawful to swear by any oath that implied not idolatry, or the belief of a false god, (I say) any grave and prudent oath, when they spake a grave truth; and whereas it was lawful for the Jews in ordinary intercourse to swear by God, so they did not swear to a lie, (to which also swearing to an impertinency might be reduced by a proportion of reason, and was so accounted of in the practice of the Jews,) but else, and in other cases, they used to swear by God, or by a creature, respectively; for, "they that swear by him shall be commended," saith the Psalmist[c]; and "swearing to the Lord of Hosts," is called "speaking the language of Canaan[d]." Most of this was rescinded; Christ forbade "all swearing," not only swearing to a lie, but also swearing to a truth in common affairs; not only swearing commonly by the name of God, but swearing commonly "by heaven," and "by the earth, by our head," or by any other oath: only let our

[z] Psal. xii. 2. [a] Psal. xxiv. 4.

[b] Οὐκ ἔλαβεν ἐπὶ ματαίῳ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ· μάρτυρα δὲ καὶ καλεῖν ἐπὶ ψεύδει θεὸν ἀσεβέστατον. — *Philo.*

[c] Psal. lxiii. 11. [d] 1 Sam. xx. 17, Isa. xix. 18.

speech be yea, or nay; that is, plainly affirming or denying[e]. In these, I say, Christ corrected the license and vanities of the Jews and Gentiles. For as the Jews accounted it religion to name God, and therefore would not swear by him, but in the more solemn occasions of their life; but in trifles they would swear by their fathers, or the light of heaven, or the ground they trod on: so the Greeks were also careful not to swear by the gods lightly, much less fallaciously; but they would swear by any thing about them, or near them, upon an occasion as vain as their oath[f]. But because these oaths are either indirectly to be referred to God, (and Christ instances in divers,) or else they are but a vain testimony, or else they give a divine honour to a creature, by making it a judge of truth and discerner of spirits; therefore Christ seems to forbid all forms of swearing whatsoever. In pursuance of which law, Basilides, being converted at the prayers of Potamiæna, a virgin-martyr, and required by his fellow-soldiers to swear upon some occasion then happening, answered, it was not lawful for him to swear, for he was a Christian; and many of the fathers have followed the words of Christ in so severe a sense, that their words seem to admit no exception.

19. But here a grain of salt must be taken, lest the letter destroy the spirit. First, it is certain the holy Jesus forbade a custom of swearing[g]; it being great irreligion to despise and lessen the name of God, which is the instrument and conveyance of our adorations to him, by making it common and applicable to trifles and ordinary accidents of our life. He that swears often, many times swears false, and, however, lays by that reverence which, being due to God, the Scripture determines it to be due at his name: his "name is to be

[e] Ἀπλᾶ γάρ ἐστι τῆς ἀληθείας ἴπτη.—*Æschyl.* Ὅπλων κρίσις.

[f] Ecce negas, jurasque mihi per templa Tonantis. Non credo, jura, Verpe, per Anchialum, id est, per Elohim Hebræorum.—*Mart.* lib. xi. *Ep.* 95.

Vide Harmenopulum in Plin. lib. v. c. 27. et Scalig. de Emend. Temp. in Append. Libror.

Μὴ προπετῶς κατὰ τῶν θεῶν ὀμνύειν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τῶν προστυγχανόντων.—*Interp. in Hom. Euseb.* lib. vi. *Hist.* cap. 4.

[g] Vide Ecclus. xxiii. 9, 11, 13.

Dominus et Jacobus ideo prohibuerunt jusjurandum, non ut illud prorsus è rebus humanis tollerent, sed quia caveremus à perjurio non facilè jurando. —*S. August. Ser.* 28. *de Verbis Apost.*

loved and feared." And therefore Christ commands that our "communication be yea, yea," or "nay, nay;" that is, our ordinary discourses should be simply affirmative or negative. In order to this, Plutarch[h] affirms out of Phavorinus, that the reason why the Greeks forbade children, who were about to swear by Hercules, to swear within doors, was, that by this delay and preparation, they might be taught not to be hasty or quick in swearing, but all such invocations should be restrained and retarded by ceremony: and Hercules himself was observed never to have sworn in all his life-time but once. 2. Not only customary swearing is forbidden, but all swearing upon a slight cause. St. Basil upbraids some Christians, his contemporaries, with the example of Clinias the Pythagorean, who, rather than he would swear, suffered a mulct of three talents. And all the followers of Pythagoras admitted no oath, unless the matter were grave, necessary, and charitable: and the wisest and gravest persons among the heathens were very severe in their counsels concerning oaths. 3. But there are some cases in which the interests of kingdoms and bodies politic, peace and confederacies, require the sanction of promissory oaths; and they whom we are bound to obey, and who may kill us if we do not, require that their interests be secured by an oath: and that in this case, and all that are equal, our blessed Saviour did not forbid oaths, is certain, not only by the example of Christians, but of all the world before and since this prohibition, understanding it to be of the nature of such natural bands and securities, without which, commonwealths, in some cases, are not easily combined, and therefore to be a thing necessary, and therefore not to be forbidden. Now what is by Christians to be esteemed a slight cause, we may determine by the account we take of other things. The glory of God is certainly no light matter; and therefore, when that is evidently and certainly concerned, not fantastically, and by vain and imaginary consequences, but by prudent and true estimation, then we may lawfully swear. We have St. Paul's example, who well understood the precept of his Master, and

[h] Ῥωμαϊκὴ ἐπίσχεσίς ἐστι πρὸς τὸν ὅρκον ἐυχερείας καὶ ταχύτητος τὸ γινόμενον· ὡς Φαβωρῖνος ἔλεγε· τὸ γὰρ ὥσπερ ἐκ παρασκευῆς μέλλησιν ἐμποιεῖ, καὶ βουλεύσασθαι ποιοῦσι.

is not to be supposed easily to have done any violence to it; but yet we find religious affirmations, and God invoked for "witness as a record upon his soul," in his epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians[i]. But these oaths were only assertory. Tertullian affirmeth, that Christians refused to swear by the genius of their prince, because it was a dæmon; but they sware by his health, and their solemn oath was by God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the majesty of the emperor. The fathers of the Ephesine council made Nestorius and Victor swear; and the bishops at Chalcedon sware by the health of their princes. But as St. Paul did it extra-judicially, when the glory of God was concerned in it, and the interest of souls; so the Christians used to swear in a cause of piety and religion, in obedience, and upon public command, or for the ends of charity and justice, both with oaths promissory and assertory, as the matter required: with this only difference, that they never did swear in the causes of justice or charity, but when they were before a magistrate; but if it were in a cause of religion, and in matters of promise, they did indeed swear among themselves, but always to, or in communities and societies, obliging themselves by oath not to commit wickedness, robberies, sacrilege, not to deceive their trust, not to detain the pledge; which rather was an act of direct intercourse with God, than a solemn or religious obligation to man. Which very thing Pliny also reports of the Christians.

20. The sum is this[k]: Since the whole subject matter of this precept is oaths promissory, or vows; all promises with oaths are regularly forbidden to Christians, unless they be made to God or God's vicegerent, in a matter not trifling. For, in the first case, a promise made to God, and a swearing by God to perform the promise, to him is all one: for the name of God being the instrument and determination of all our addresses, we cannot be supposed to speak to God without using of his name explicitly, or by implication: and

[i] Rom. i. 9. 2 Cor. xi. 31. Gal. i. 20.

[k] Τὸ ναὶ καὶ τὸ οὐ συλλαβαὶ δύο· ἀλλ' ὅμως τὸ κράτιστον τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἡ ἀλήθεια, καὶ ὁ ἴσχατος ὅρος τῆς πιστέως, τὸ ψεῦδος, τοῖς μικροῖς τούτοις ῥήμασι πολλάκις ἐμπεφύχεται. — *S. Basil. lib. de Spir. S.*

Necessitas magnum humanæ imbecilitatis præsidium; quicquid cogit, excusat. — *Sen.*

therefore he that promises to God makes a promise, and uses God's name in the promise; the promise itself being in the nature of a prayer, or solemn invocation of God. In the second case, when the public necessity requires it, of which we are not judges, but are under authority, we find the lawfulness by being bound to believe, or not to contradict, the pretence of its necessity; only care is to be taken that the matter be grave or religious, that is, it is to be esteemed and presumed so by us, if the oath be imposed by our lawful superiors, and to be cared for by them: or else it is so to be provided for by ourselves, when our intercourse is with God, as in vows and promises passed to God; being careful that we do not offer to God goat's hair, or the fumes of mushrooms, or the blood of swine; that is, things either impious or vain. But in our communication, that is, in our ordinary intercourse with men, we must promise by simple testimony, not by religious adjurations, though a creature be the instrument of the oath.

21. But this forbids not assertory oaths at all, or deposing in judgment; for of this Christ speaks not here, it being the proper matter of another commandment: and since (as St. Paul affirms) "an oath is the end of all controversy[1]," and that the necessity of commonwealths requires that a period should be fixed to questions, and a rule for the nearest certainty for judgment; whatsoever is necessary is not unlawful; and Christ, who came to knit the bonds of government faster by the stricture of more religious ties, cannot be understood to have given precepts to dissolve the instruments of judicature and prudent government. But concerning assertory oaths, although they are not forbidden, but supposed in the ninth commandment to be done before our judges in the cause of our neighbour; yet because they are only so supposed, and no way else mentioned, by permission or intimation, therefore they are to be estimated by the proportions of this precept concerning promissory oaths: they may be taken in judgment and righteousness, but never lightly, never extra-judicially; only a less cause, so it be judicial, may authorize an assertory than a promissory oath; because many cases occur, in which peace and justice may be

[1] Heb. vi. 16.

concerned, which without an oath are indeterminable, but there are but few necessities to confirm a promise by an oath. And therefore the reverence of the name of God ought not to be entrenched upon in accidents of little or no necessity; God, not having made many necessities in this case, would not, in the matter of promise, give leave to use his name but when an extraordinary case happens. An oath in promises is of no use for ending questions and giving judicial sentences; and the faith of a Christian, and the word of a just person, will do most of the work of promises; and it is very much to the disreputation of our religion or ourselves, if we fall into hypocrisy or deceit, or if a Christian asseveration were not of value equal with an oath. And therefore Christ forbidding promissory oaths, and commanding so great simplicity of spirit and honesty, did consonantly to the design and perfection of his institution, intending to make us so just and sincere, that our religion being infinite obligation to us, our own promises should pass for bond enough to others, and the religion receive great honour, by being esteemed a sufficient security and instrument of public intercourse[m]. And this was intimated by our Lord himself, in that reason he is pleased to give of the prohibition of swearing: "Let your communication be Yea, yea, Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more, cometh of evil[n]:" that is, as good laws come from ill manners, the modesty of clothing from the shame of sin, antidotes and physic by occasion of poisons and diseases; so is swearing an effect of distrust, and want of faith or honesty, on one or both sides. Men dare not trust the word of a Christian, or a Christian is not just and punctual to his promises, and this calls for confirmation by an oath. So that oaths suppose a fault, though they are not faults always

[m] Μὴ ὀμνύναι θεούς· ἀσκεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸν δεῖν ἀξιόπιστον παρέχειν.—*Hierocl.*

Vide Marc. Anton. in Descriptione Viri Boni, lib. iii. μήτε ὅρκου δεόμενος. Τῶν δικαίων ναί ἐστι ναί, καὶ οὔ ἐστιν οὔ, tritum est; ità scil. ut facta dictis respondere justorum sit.

Κάλλιστον, καὶ βιοφιλέστατον, καὶ ἁρμοστὸν τῇ λογικῇ φύσει τὸ ἀνώμοτον, οὕτως ἀληθεύειν ἐφ' ἑκάστους διδιδαγμένην, ὡς λόγους ὅρκους εἶναι νομίζεσθαι.—*Philo.*

Verbum sacerdotis apud Christianæ ecclesiæ ministros etiam hodie manet loco juramenti. Ad eundem sensum apud antiquos fuerunt verba illa prætoris ex edicto perpetuo, "Sacerdotem Vestalem et flaminem dialem in omni mea jurisdictione jurare non cogam."—*A. Gell.* lib. x. c. 15.

[n] Matth. v. 37.

themselves; whatsoever is more than yea or nay, is not always evil, but it always cometh of evil. And, therefore, the Essenes esteemed every man that was put to his oath no better than an infamous person, a perjurer, or at least suspected, not esteemed a just man: and the heathens would not suffer the priest of Jupiter to swear, because all men had great opinion of his sanctity and authority: and the Scythians derided Alexander's caution and timorous provision, when he required an oath of them; "Nos religionem in ipsa fide novimus [o], Our faith is our bond:" and they who are willing to deceive men will not stick to deceive God, when they have called God to witness [p]. But I have a caution to insert for each, which I propound as an humble advice to persons eminent and publicly interested.

22. First: That princes, and such as have power of decreeing the injunction of promissory oaths, be very curious and reserved, not lightly enjoining such promises, neither in respect of the matter trivial, nor yet frequently [q], nor without great reason enforcing. The matter of such promises must be only what is already matter of duty or religion; for else the matter is not grave enough for the calling of God to testimony: but when it is a matter of duty, then the oath is no other than a vow, or promise, made to God in the presence of men. And because Christians are otherwise very much obliged to do all which is their duty, in matters both civil and religious, of obedience and piety; therefore it must be an instant necessity, and a great cause, to superinduce such a confirmation as derives from the so sacredly invocating the name of God; it must be when there is great necessity that the duty be actually performed, and when the supreme power either hath not power sufficient to punish the delinquent, or may miss to have notice of the delict. For in these cases it is reasonable to bind the faith of the obliged persons by the fear of God after a more special manner; but else there is no reason sufficient to demand of the subject any farther security than their own faith and contract. The reason of this advice relies upon the strictness of the words

[o] Curtius, lib. vii.

[p] Qui non reverentur homines, fallent Deos. — *Cicero pro Roscio.*

[q] Οὐ γὰρ πίστεως τεκμήριον πολυορκία, ἀλλὰ ἀπιστίας ἐστὶ, παρὰ τοῖς εὐφρονοῦσι. — *Philo in Decal.*

of this precept against promissory oaths, and the reverence we owe to the name of God. Oaths of allegiance are fit to be imposed in a troubled state, or to a mutinous people: but it is not so fit to tie the people, by oath, to abstain from transportations of metal, or grain, or leather, from which, by penalties, they are with as much security, and less suspicion of iniquity, restrained.

23. Secondly: Concerning assertory oaths and depositions in judgment, although a greater liberty may be taken in the subject matter of the oath, and we may, being required to it, swear in judgment, though the cause be a question of money, or our interest, or the rights of a society; and St. Athanasius purged himself by oath before the emperor Constantius: yet it were a great pursuance and security of this part of Christian religion, if, in no case, contrary oaths might be admitted, in which, it is certain, one part is perjured to the ruin of their souls, to the intricating of the judgment, to the dishonour of religion[r]; but that such rules of prudence and reasonable presumption be established, that upon the oath of that party which the law shall choose, and, upon probable grounds, shall presume for, the sentence may be established. For, by a small probability, there may a surer judgment be given, than upon the confidence of contradictory oaths; and after the sin the judge is left to the uncertainty of conjectures as much as if but one part had sworn; and to much more, because such an oath is, by the consent of all men, accepted as a rule to determine in judgment. By these discourses we understand the intention of our blessed Master in this precept: and I wish by this, or any thing else, men would be restrained from that low, cheap, unreasonable, and inexcusable vice of customary swearing, to which we have nothing to invite us that may lessen the iniquity, for which we cannot pretend temptation, nor allege infirmity, but it begins by recklessness and a malicious carelessness, and is continued by the strength of habit, and the greatest immensity of folly. And I consider that Christian religion, being so holy an institution, to which we are invited by so great promises, in which we are in-

[r] Ἀλλ' οἵπερ πρότεροι ὑπὲρ ὅρκια δηλήσαντο
—— τέρενα χρόα γῦπες ἔδονται. — *Hom. Iliad.* lib. iv.

structed by so clear revelations, and to the performance of our duties compelled by the threatenings of a sad and insupportable eternity, should more than sufficiently endear the performance of this duty to us. The name of a Christian is a high and potent antidote against all sin, if we consider aright the honour of the name, the undertaking of our covenant, and the reward of our duty. The Jews eat no swine's flesh, because they are of Moses, and the Turks drink no wine, because they are Mahometans; and yet we swear for all we are Christians, than which there is not in the world a greater conviction of our baseness and irreligion. Is the authority of the holy Jesus so despicable? are his laws so unreasonable, his rewards so little, his threatenings so small, that we must needs, in contempt of all this, profane the great name of God, and trample under foot the laws of Jesus, and cast away the hopes of heaven, and enter into security to be possessed by hell-torments for swearing, that is, for speaking like a fool, without reason, without pleasure, without reputation, much to our disesteem, much to the trouble of civil and wise persons with whom we join in society and intercourse? Certainly hell will be heated seven times hotter for a customary swearer, and every degree of his unreasonableness will give him a new degree of torment, when he shall find himself in flames, for being a stupid, an atheistical, an irreligious fool. This only I desire should be observed, that our blessed Master forbids not only swearing by God, but by any creature; for every oath by a creature does involve and tacitly relate to God. And therefore, saith Christ, "Swear not by heaven, for it is the throne of God [s];" and he that sweareth by the throne of God, "sweareth by it, and by him that sitteth thereon." So that it is not a less matter to swear by a creature than to swear by God; for a creature cannot be the instrument of testimony, but as it is a relative to God; and it, by implication, calls the God of that creature to witness. So that although, in such cases in which it is permitted to swear by God, we may, in those cases, express our oath in the form of advocating and calling

[s] Ὀμνυμι δ' ἱερὸν αἰθέρ', οἴκησιν Διός. — *Sophoc. Menal.*

Qui per salutem suam jurat, Deum jurare videtur; respectu enim divini numinis jurat. — *Ulpian. J. C. Concil. Chalc.* c. 25.

the creature, (as did the primitive Christians swearing by the health of their emperor, and as Joseph swearing by the life of Pharaoh, and as Elisha swearing by the life of Elias[t], and as did St. Paul, protesting " by the rejoicing he had in Jesus Christ[u]," and as we, in our forms of swearing in courts of judicature, touch the Gospels, saying, " So help me God, and the contents of this book ;" and in a few ages lately past, bishops and priests sometimes swore upon the cross, sometimes upon the altar, sometimes by their holy order :) yet we must remember that this, in other words and ceremonies, is but a calling God for witness ; and he that swears by the cross, swears by the holy crucifix, that is, Jesus crucified thereon. And these, and the like forms, are, therefore, not to be used in ordinary communication, because they relate to God ; they are as obligatory as the immediate invocation of his holiness and majesty ; and it was a Judaical vanity to think swearing by creatures was less obliging[x] : they are just with the same restraints made to be religious as the most solemn invocation of the holy and reverend name of God, lawful or unlawful as the other : unless the swearing by a creature come to be spoiled by some other intervening circumstance, that is, with a denying it to relate to God ; for then it becomes superstition as well as profanation, and it gives to a creature what is proper to God ; or when the creature is contemptible, or less than the gravity of the matter, as if a man should swear by a fly, or the shadow of a tree ; or when there is an indecorum in the thing, or something that does, at too great distance, relate to God : for that which, with greatest vicinity, refers to God in several religions, is the best instrument of an oath, and nearest to God's honour ; as in Christianity are the holy sacrament, the cross, the altar, and the Gospels ; and, therefore, too great a distance may be an indecency next to a disparagement.

[t] 2 Kings, ii. 2. [u] 1 Cor. xv. 31. *Vide suprà, num.* 19.

[x] Per tua jurares sacra, tuumque caput. — *Mart.*

Deut. xxx. 19. Isa. i. 2. Micah, i. 2. S. August. Epist. ad Publicolam; et lib. li. Duo Patroni, Sect. Si quis juraverit; et lib. Non erit, D. de Jurejurando. Tertul. ad Scap.

Testor, chara, deos — teque, tuumque
Dulce caput, magicas invitam accingier artes. — *Virgil.* lib. iv. *Æneid.*
Perque suos illam quondam jurâsse recordor,
Perque meos oculos ; et doluere mei. — *Ovid.*

This only may be added to this consideration; that although an oath, which is properly calling God or God's relative into testimony, is to be understood according to the former discourse; yet there may be great affirmations or negations respectively, and confirmed by forms of vehement asseveration, such as the customs of a nation or consent shall agree upon: and those do, in some cases, promote our belief, or confirm our pretensions, better than a plain yea or no; because, by such consent, the person renders himself infamous if he breaks his word or trust. And although this will not come under the restraint of Christ's words, because they are not properly oaths, but circumstances of earnest affirmation or negation; yet these are human attestations, introduced by custom or consent; and as they come not under the notion of swearing, so they are forms of testimony and collateral engagement of a more strict truth.

The Fourth Commandment.

24. The holy Jesus having specified the great commandment of "loving God with all our heart," in this one instance of hallowing and keeping his name sacred, that is, from profane and common talk, and less prudent and unnecessary intercourses, instanced in no other commandment of Moses: but having frequent occasion to speak of the sabbath, for ever expresses his own dominion over the day, and that he had dissolved the bands of Moses in this instance; that now we were no more obliged to that rest which the Jews religiously observed by prescript of the law[y]; and by divers acts against securities of the then received practices, did desecrate the day, making it a broken yoke, and the first great instance of Christian liberty. And when the apostle gave instructions that "no man should judge his brother in a holy day, or new moons, or the sabbath-days[z]," he declared all the Judaical feasts to be obliterated by the sponge which Jesus tasted on the cross; it was within the manuscript of ordinances, and there it was cancelled. And there was

[y] Καὶ μετὰ τὸ σαββατίσαι ἑορταζέτω ὁ φιλόχριστος τὴν κυριακήν. Ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἑορ τηνηγεῖται. — *Ignat. Ep. ad Magnes.*

Diog. Clem. Apost. Constit. lib. vii. c. 24, et lib. viii. Tertul. Monog. Canon. Apost. 65. et Zonar. in eund. Vide etiam Synod. Laodic.

[z] Col. ii. 16.

nothing moral in it, but that we do honour to God for the creation, and to that and all other purposes of religion, separate and hallow some portion of our time. The primitive church kept both the sabbath and the Lord's day till the time of the Laodicean council, about three hundred years after Christ's nativity, and almost in every thing made them equal; and, therefore, did not esteem the Lord's day to be substituted in the place of the obliterated sabbath, but a feast celebrated by great reason and perpetual consent, without precept or necessary Divine injunction. But the liberty of the church was great: they found themselves disobliged from that strict and necessary rest which was one great part of the sabbatic rites, only they were glad of the occasion to meet often for offices of religion, and the day served well for the gaining and facilitating the conversion of the Jews, and for the honourable sepulture of the synagogue, it being kept so long, like the forty days' mourning of Israel for the death of their father Jacob; but their liberty they improved not to license, but as an occasion of more frequent assemblies. And there is something in it for us to imitate, even to sanctify the name of God in the great work of the creation, reading his praises in the book of his creatures, and taking all occasions of religious acts and offices, though in none of the Jewish circumstances.

25. Concerning the observation of the Lord's day, which now the church observes, and ever did, in remembrance of the resurrection, because it is a day of positive and ecclesiastical institution, it is fit that the church, who instituted the day, should determine the manner of its observation. It was set apart in honour of the resurrection; and it were not ill if all churches would, into the weekly offices, put some memorial of that mystery, that the reason of the festival might be remembered with the day, and God thanked with the renewing of the offices. But because religion was the design of the feast, and leisure was necessary for religion, therefore to abstain from suits of law and servile works[a], but such works as are of necessity and charity, (which, to observe, are of themselves a very good religion,) is a necessary

[a] Feriis jurgia amovento, easque in famulis operibus patratis habento.—*Cicer. de Leg.* lib. ii.

duty of the day [b]; and to do acts of public religion is the other part of it. So much is made matter of duty by the intervention of authority: and though the church hath made no more prescriptions in this, and God hath made none at all; yet he who keeps the day most strictly, most religiously, he keeps it best, and most consonant to the design of the church, and the ends of religion, and the opportunity of the present leisure, and the interests of his soul. The acts of religion proper for the day are prayers and public liturgies, preaching, catechizing, acts of charity, visiting sick persons, acts of eucharist to God, of hospitality to our poor neighbours, of friendliness and civility to all, reconciling differences; and after the public assemblies are dissolved, any act of direct religion to God, or of ease and remission to servants, or whatsoever else is good in manners, or in piety, or in mercy. What is said of this great feast of the Christians is to be understood to have a greater severity and obligation in the anniversary of the resurrection, of the ascension, of the nativity of our blessed Saviour, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost. And all days festival to the honour of God, in remembrance of the holy apostles, and martyrs, and departed saints, as they are with prudence to be chosen and retained by the church, so as not to be unnecessary, or burdensome, or useless; so they are to be observed by us, as instances of our love of the communion of saints, and our thankfulness for the blessing, and the example.

[b] Quippe etiam festis quædam exercere diebus
Fas et jura sinunt; rivos deducere nulla
Religio vetuit, segeti prætendere sepem,
Insidias avibus moliri, incendere vepres,
Balantûmque gregem fluvio mersare salubri.— *Virgil. apud Macrob.*

De ferocia Tiberii dedit testimonium Tacit. lib. iii. Annal. his verbis: Quemne diem vacuum pœna? ubi inter sacra et vota, quo tempore verbis etiam profanis abstineri mos esset, vincula et laqueus inducantur.

Ἑορτὴ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστιν ἢ τὰ δίοντα πράττειν. — *Thucyd.* lib. i.

Ἕκαστος ὑμῶν σαββατιζέτω πνευματικῶς, μελέτην νόμου χαίρων, οὐ σώματος ἀνέσει, δημιουργίαν θεοῦ θαυμάζων, οὐχ ἑωλα ἐσθίων, καὶ χλιαρὰ πίνων, καὶ μεμετρημένα βαδίζων, καὶ ὀρχήσει καὶ πόροις οὖν οὐκ ἔχουσι χαίρων. — *S. Ignat. Ep. ad Magnes.*

Judæi serviliter observant diem sabbati, ad luxuriam, ad ebrietatem. Quanto meliùs fœminæ eorum lanam facerent, quàm illo die in Menianis saltarent? — *S. August. Tract. 4. in Joan.* Et in Psal. xcii. idem ferè.

The Fifth Commandment.

26. "Honour thy father and thy mother." This commandment Christ made also to be Christian, by his frequent repetition and mention of it in his sermons and laws, and so ordered it, that it should be the band of civil government and society. In the decalogue God sets this precept immediately after the duties that concern himself, our duty to parents being in the confines with our duty to God, the parents being, in order of nature, next to God, the cause of our being and production, and the great almoners of eternity, conveying to us the essences of reasonable creatures, and the charities of Heaven. And when our blessed Saviour, in a sermon to the Pharisees, spake of duty to parents, he rescued it from the impediments of a vain tradition, and secured this duty, though against a pretence of religion towards God, telling us that God would not himself accept a gift which we took from our parents' needs. This duty to parents is the very firmament and band of commonwealths. He that honours his parents will also love his brethren, derived from the same loins, he will dearly account of all his relatives and persons of the same cognation[c]; and so families are united, and of them cities and societies are framed. And because parents and patriarchs of families and of nations had regal power, they who, by any change, succeeded in the care and government of cities and kingdoms, succeeded in the power and authority of fathers, and became so, in estimate of law and true divinity, to all their people. So that the duty here commanded is due to all our fathers in the sense of Scripture and laws, not only to our natural, but

[c] Ὁ λοιδορῶν τὸν πατέρα δυσφημεῖ λόγῳ
Τὸν εἰς τὸ θεῖον δὲ μελετᾷ βλασφημίαν. — *Menand.*

Ἐμφανῶς θεοί, μιμούμενοι τὸν ἀγέννητον ἐν τῷ ζωοπλαστεῖν. — *De Parentibus dixit Philo ad Decal.*

Vivet extento Proculeius ævo,
Notus in fratres animi paterni:
Illum aget pennâ metuente solvi
Fama superstes. — *Hor.* lib. ii. *Od.* 2.

Τούς τε γονῆς τίμα, τούς τ' ἄγχιστ' ἐκγεγαῶτας. — *Hierocl.*

Cùm tibi sint fratres, fratres ulciscere læsos:
Cùmque pater tibi sit, jura tuere patris.
Necessaria præsidia vitæ debentur his maximè. — *Cicer. Offic.* 3.

to our civil fathers, that is, to kings and governors. And the Scripture adds, mothers; for they also, being instruments of the blessing, are the objects of the duty. The duty is, "honour;" that is, reverence, and support, if they shall need it. And that which our blessed Saviour calls, "not honouring our parents[d]," in St. Matthew, is called in St. Mark, "doing nothing for them[e];" and honour is expounded by St. Paul[f], to be "maintenance," as well as "reverence." Then we honour our parents, if with great readiness we minister to their necessities, and communicate our estate, and attend them in sicknesses, and supply their wants, and, as much as lies in us, give them support, who gave us being.

The Sixth Commandment.

27. "Thou shalt do no murder[g]." So it was said to them of old time. He that kills shall be guilty of judgment; that is, he is to die by the sentence of the judge. To this Christ makes an appendix: "But I say unto you, he that is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment." This addition of our blessed Saviour, as all the other, which are severer explications of the law than the Jews admitted, was directed against the vain and imperfect opinion of the lawyers, who thought to be justified by their external works; supposing, if they were innocent in matter of fact, God would require no more of them than man did; and what, by custom or silence of the laws, was not punishable by the judge, was harmless before God; and this made them to trust in the letter, to neglect the duties of repentance, to omit asking pardon for their secret irregularities, and the obliquities and aversations of their spirits; and this St. Paul also complains of, that, neglecting "the righteousness of God, they sought to establish their own[h]," that is, according to man's judgment. But our blessed Saviour tells them, that such an innocence is not enough; God requires more than conformity, and observation of the fact, and exte-

[d] Matt. xv. 6. [e] Mark, vii. 12. [f] 1 Tim. v. 18.

Γονίας τιμήσωμεν ὑπερβαλλόντως, σώματος ὑπηρεσίας καὶ χρημάτων χορηγίαν αὐτοῖς ὑπέχοντες ὅτι μάλιστα προθυμοτάτην. — *Hierocl.*

Φέρει δ' ἐπὶ τὴν ἐπιμυθίαν αὐτοὺς, καὶ τὸ τῶν δουλικωτέρων ὑπηρετημάτων ἅπτεσθαι αὐτοὺς παῖδας, ὥστε καὶ πόδας ἀπονίψαι. — *Hierocl. apud Stobæum.*

[g] Lev. xxiv. 21. Num. xxxv. 16, 17. [h] Rom. x. 3.

rior piety, placing justice not in legal innocency, or not being condemned in judgment of the law and human judicature, but in the righteousness of the spirit also: for the first acquits us before man, but by this we shall be held upright in judgment before the Judge of all the world. And, therefore, besides abstinence from murder or actual wounds, Christ forbids all "anger without cause against our brother," that is, against any man.

28. By which not the first motions are forbidden; the twinklings of the eye, as the philosophers call them, the propassions and sudden irresistible alterations; for it is impossible to prevent them, unless we could give ourselves a new nature[i], any more than we can refuse to wink with our eye when a sudden blow is offered at it, or refuse to yawn when we see a yawning sleepy person: but by frequent and habitual mortification, and by continual watchfulness, and standing in readiness against all inadvertencies, we shall lessen the inclination, and account fewer sudden irreptions. A wise and meek person should not kindle at all, but after violent and great collision; and then, if like a flint he sends a spark out, it must as soon be extinguished as it shows, and cool as soon as sparkle. But, however, the sin is not in the natural disposition. But when we entertain it, though it be, as Seneca expresses it, "cum voluntate non contumaci[k]," without a determination of revenge, then it begins to be a sin. Every indignation against the person of the man, in us is pride and self-love; and towards others ungentleness, and an immorigerous spirit. Which is to be understood, when the cause is not sufficient, or when the anger continues longer, or is excessive in the degrees of its proportion.

29. The causes of allowable anger are, when we see God dishonoured, or a sin committed, or any irregularity, or fault in matter of government; a fault against the laws of a family or good manners, disobedience or stubbornness; which, in all instances where they may be prudently judged such by the governor, yet possibly they are not all direct sins against God and religion. In such cases we may "be angry." But then we may also sin, if we exceed in time, or measure of degree.

[i] S. Hieron. Epist. ad Demetriad. [k] Seneca, lib. ii. de Ira, c. 4.

30. The proportion of time St. Paul expresses, by "not letting the sun set upon our anger." Leontius Patricius[1] was one day extremely and unreasonably angry with John, the patriarch of Alexandria; at evening, the patriarch sent a servant to him with this message: "Sir, the sun is set." Upon which Patricius reflecting, and the grace of God making the impression deep, visible, and permanent, he threw away his anger, and became wholly subject to the counsel and ghostly aids of the patriarch. This limit St. Paul borrowed from the psalmist; for that which in the fourth Psalm, verse 5, we read, "Stand in awe, and sin not," the Septuagint reads, "Be angry, but sin not." And this measure is taken from the analogy of the law of the Jews, that a malefactor should not hang upon the accursed tree after the sun was set: and if the laws laid down their just anger against malefactors as soon as the sun descended, and took off his beams from beholding the example; much more is it reasonable that a private anger, which is not warranted by authority, not measured by laws, not examined by solemnities of justice, not made reasonable by considering the degree of the causes, not made charitable by intending the public good, not secured from injuriousness by being disinterested, and such an anger in which the party is judge, and witness, and executioner. It is, (I say,) but reason, such an anger should unyoke, and go to bed with the sun, since justice and authority laid by the rods and axes as soon as the sun unteamed his chariot. Plutarch reports, that the Pythagoreans were strict observers of the very letter of this caution[m]; for if anger had boiled up to the height of injury or reproach, before sun-set they would shake hands, salute each other, and depart friends; for they were ashamed that the same anger, which had disturbed the counsels of the day, should also trouble the quiet and dreams of the night, lest anger, by mingling with their rest and nightly fancies, should grow natural and habitual. Well, anger must last no longer; but neither may a Christian's anger last so long; for if his anger last a whole day, it will certainly, before night, sour into a crime. A man's anger is like the spleen; at the first it is natural, but in its excess and

[1] Leontius Cypr. Episc. in Vita ipsius, c. 14.

[m] Εἴ ποτε προσκχθεῖεν εἰς λοιδορίαν ὑπ' ὀργῆς, πρὶν ἢ τὸν ἥλιον δῦναι, τὰς δεξιὰς ἐμβάλλοντες ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι διελύοντο. — *Plutarch.*

distemper it swells into a disease: and, therefore, although to be angry at the presence of certain objects is natural, and therefore is indifferent, because he that is an essential enemy to sin never made sin essential to a man; yet, unless it be also transient, and pass off at the command of reason and religion, it quickly becomes criminal. The meaning is, that it be no more but a transient passion, not permanent at all; but that the anger against the man pass into indignation against the crime, and pity of the person, till the pity grows up into endeavours to help him. For an angry, violent, and disturbed man, is like that white bramble of Judæa, of which Josephus reports, that it is set on fire by impetuous winds, and consumes itself, and burns the neighbour-plants. And the evil effects[n] of a violent and passionate anger are so great, so dangerous, so known to all the world, that the very consideration of them is the best argument in the world to dispute against it; families and kingdoms have suffered horrid calamities; and whatsoever is violent in art or nature, hath been made the instrument of sadness, in the hands of anger.

31. The measure of the degree is to be estimated by human prudence, that it exceed not the value of the cause, nor the proportion of other circumstances, and that it cause no eruption into indiscretions or indecencies. For, therefore, Moses's anger, though for God and religion, was reproved, because it went forth into a violent and troubled expression, and showed the degree to be inordinate. For it is in this passion as in lightning, which, if it only breaks the cloud and makes a noise, shows a tempest and disturbance in nature, but the hurt is none; but if it seizes upon a man, or dwells upon a house, or breaks a tree, it becomes a judgment and a curse. And as the one is a mischief in chance and accident, so the other is in morality and choice: if it passes from passion into action, from a transient violence to a permanent injury, if it abides, it scorches the garment or burns the body; and there is no way to make it innocent, but to remove and extinguish it; and, while it remains, to tie the hands, and

[n] Iræ Thyesten exitio gravi
Stravere, et altis urbibus ultimæ
Stetere causæ cur perirent
Funditus, imprimeretque muris
Hostile aratrum exercitus insolens. — *Horat.* lib. i. *Od.* 16.

pare the nails, and muzzle it, that it may neither scratch, nor bite, nor talk. An anger in God's cause may become unhallowed, if it sees the sun rise and set: and an anger in the cause of a man is innocent, according to the degrees of its suddenness and discontinuance; for, by its quickness and volatile motion it shows, that it was, 1. unavoidable in its production; or, 2. that it was harmless in the event; or, 3. quickly suppressed: according to which several cases, anger is either, 1. natural; or, 2. excusable; or, 3. the matter of a virtue.

32. The Vulgar Latin Bible, in this precept of our blessed Saviour, reads not the appendix, "without a cause," but indefinitely, "he that is angry with his brother;" and St. Jerome affirms, that the clause, "without a cause," is not to be found in the true Greek copies: upon supposition of which, because it is not to be imagined that all anger, in all causes and in all degrees, is simply unlawful; and St. Paul distinguishes being angry from committing a sin, "Be angry, but sin not;" these words are left to signify such an anger as is the crime of homicide in the heart, like the secret lusting called by Christ "adultery in the heart;" and so here is forbidden, not only the outward act, but the inward inclinations to murder, that is, an anger° with deliberation and purpose of revenge; this being explicative and additional to the precept forbidding murder: which also our blessed Saviour seems to have intended, by threatening the same penalty to this anger or spiritual homicide which the law inflicted upon the actual and external; that is, judgment or condemnation. And because this prohibition of anger is an explanation and more severe commentary upon the sixth commandment, it is more than probable that this anger, to which condemnation is threatened, is such an anger as hath entertained something of mischief in the spirit. And this agrees well enough with the former interpretation, save that it affirms no degree of anger to be criminal, as to the height of condemnation, unless it be with a thought of violence or desires of revenge; the other degrees receiving their heightenings and declensions, as they keep their distance or approach to this. And besides,

° Καὶ πάσῃ ὀργῇ ἕπεσθαί τινα ἡδονὴν τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐλπίδος τοῦ τιμωρήσασθαι. — *Arist. 2. Rhet.*

by not limiting or giving caution concerning the cause, it restrains the malice only, or the degree; but it permits other causes of anger to be innocent besides those spiritual and moral, of the interests of God's glory and religion. But this is also true, whichsoever of the readings be retained. For the irascible faculty, having in nature an object proper to its constitution and natural design, if our anger be commenced upon an object naturally troublesome, the anger is very natural, and nowhere said to be irregular. And he who is angry with a servant's unwariness or inadvertency, or the remissness of a child's spirit and application to his studies, or on any sudden displeasure, is not in any sense guilty of prevaricating the sixth commandment, unless, besides the object, he adds an inequality of degree, or unhandsome circumstance, or adjunct. And, possibly, it is not in the nature of man to be strict in discipline, if the prohibitions of anger be confined only to causes of religion[p]; and it were hard that such an anger, which is innocent in all effects, and a good instrument of government, should become criminal and damnable; because some instances of displeasure are in actions not certainly and apparently sinful. So that our blessed Saviour, forbidding us to be "angry without a cause," means such causes which are not only irregularities in religion, but deflexions in manners; and an anger may be religious, and political, and economical, according as it meets with objects proper to it in several kinds. It is sometimes necessary, that a man carry a tempest in his face and a rod in his hand; but for ever let him have a smooth mind, or at least under command, and within the limits of reason and religion; that he may steer securely, and avoid the rocks of sin: for then he may reprove a friend that did amiss, or chastise an offending son, or correct a vicious servant. The sum is this: There are no other bounds to hallow, or to allow and legitimate anger but that, 1. The cause be religion, or matter of government: 2. That the degree of the anger, in prudent accounts,

[p] Si ira non fuerit, nec doctrina proficit, nec judicia stant, nec crimina compescuntur. — *S. Chrysost.*

Si nulla ira ex virtute surgeret, Divinæ animadversionis impetum per gladium Phinehas non placàsset. — *S. Greg.* lib. v. *Moral.*

Πιθανότατοι γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως οἱ ἐν τοῖς πάθεσίν εἰσι, καὶ κυμαίνει ὁ κυματιζόμενος, καὶ χαλεπαίνει ὀργιζόμενος, κ. τ. λ. — *Arist. Poetic.*

be no bigger than the cause: 3. That if it goes forth, it be not expressed in any action of uncharitableness, or unseasonable violence: 4. Whether it goes forth or abides at home, it must not dwell long any where; nor abide in the form of a burning coal, but at the most of a thin flame, thence passing into air salutary and gentle, fit to breathe, but not to blast. There is this only nicety to be observed: That, although an anger arising for religion, or in the matter of government, cannot innocently abide long; yet it may abide till it hath passed forth into its proper and temperate expression, whether of reprehension or chastisement, and then it must sit down. But if the anger arises from another cause, (provided it be of itself innocent, not sinful in the object or cause,) the passion in its first spring is also innocent, because it is natural, and on the sudden unavoidable: but this must be suppressed within, and is not permitted to express itself at all: for in that degree in which it goes out of the mouth, or through the eyes, or from the hand, in that degree it is violent, ought to be corrected and restrained; for so that passion was intended to be turned into virtue. For this passion is like its natural parent or instrument: and if choler keeps in its proper seat, it is an instrument of digestion; but if it goes forth into the stranger regions of the body, it makes a fever: and this anger, which commences upon natural causes, though so far as it is natural it must needs be innocent, yet when any consent of the will comes to it, or that it goes forth in any action or voluntary signification, it also becomes criminal. Such an anger is only permitted to be born and die; but it must never take nourishment, or exercise any act of life.

33. But if that prohibition be indefinite, then it is certain, the analogy of the commandment, of which this is an explication, refers it to revenge or malice: it is an anger that is wrath, an anger of revenge or injury, which is here prohibited. And I add this consideration: That since it is certain, that Christ intended this for an explication of the prohibition of homicide, the clause of "without cause[q]," seems less natural and proper. For it would intimate, that though anger of revenge is forbidden, when it is rash and unreasonable; yet

[q] Εἰκῆ significat *in vanum*; i. e. non solùm extra causam, sed et extra modum.

that there might be a cause of being angry, with a purpose of revenge and recompense, and that in such a case it is permitted to them, to whom in all other it is denied, that is, to private persons; which is against the meekness and charity of the Gospel. More reasonable it is, that as no man might kill his brother, in Moses's law, by his own private authority; so an anger is here forbidden, such an anger which no qualification can permit to private persons; that is, an anger with purposes of revenge.

34. But Christ adds, that a farther degree of this sin is, when our anger breaks out in contumelies and ill language, and receives its increment according to the degree and injury of the reproach. There is a homicide in the tongue, as well as in the heart; and he that kills a man's reputation[r] by calumnies, or slander, or open reviling, hath broken this commandment. But this is not to be understood so, but that persons in authority, or friends[s], may reprehend a vicious person in language proper to his crime, or expressive of his malice or iniquity. Christ called Herod, "fox:" and although St. Michael "brought not a railing accusation" against Satan, yet the Scripture calls him "an accuser," and Christ calls him "the father of lies;" and St. Peter, "a devourer," and a "roaring lion;" and St. John calls Diotrephes, "a lover of pre-eminence," or ambitious. But that which is here forbidden, is not a representing the crimes of the man for his emendation, or any other charitable or religious end, but a reviling him to do him mischief, to murder his reputation: which also shows, that whatever is here forbidden is, in some

[r] ——— Δεινὴν δὲ βροτῶν ὑπαλεύεο φήμην.
Φήμη γὰρ τε κακὴ πέλεται· κούφη μὲν ἀεῖραι
Ῥεῖα μάλ', ἀργαλέη δὲ φέρειν, χαλεπὴ δ' ἀποθέσθαι.
Hesiod. Ἔργ. lib. ii.

[s] ——— Insuevit pater optimus hoc me,
Ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quæque notando:
Quum me hortaretur parcè, frugaliter, atque
Viverem uti contentus eo quod mî ipse parâsset;
Nonne vides Albi ut malè vivat filius, utque
Barrus inops? ——— ———
——— A turpi meretricis amore
Cùm deterreret; Sectani dissimilis sis.
Ne sequerer mœchas ———
——— Deprensi non bella est fama Treboni,
Aiebat. ——— *Horat. Sat.* iv. lib. i.

sense or other, accounted homicide; the anger in order to reproach, and both in order to murder, subject to the same punishment, because forbidden in the same period of the law; save only that, according to the degrees of the sin, Christ proportions several degrees of punishment in the other world, which he apportions to the degrees of death which had ever been among the Jews, viz. the sword, and stoning to death, which were punishments legal and judicial; and the burning infants in the valley of Hinnom, which was a barbarous and superstitious custom used formerly by their fathers, in imitation of the Phœnician accursed rites.

35. The remedies against anger, which are prescribed by masters of spiritual life, are partly taken from rules of prudence, partly from piety, and more precise rules of religion. In prudence: 1. Do not easily entertain, or at all encourage, or willingly hear, or promptly believe, tale-bearers and reporters of other men's faults: for oftentimes we are set on fire by an *ignis fatuus*, a false flame, and an empty story. 2. Live with peaceable people, if thou canst. 3. Be not inquisitive into the misdemeanours of others, or the reports which are made of you. 4. Find out reasons of excuse, to alleviate and lessen the ignorances of a friend, or carelessnesses of a servant. 5. Observe what object is aptest to inflame thee, and, by special arts of fortification, stop up the avenues to that part. If losses, if contempt, if incivilities, if slander, still make it the greatest part of your employment to subdue the impotency of that passion that is more apt to raise tempests. 6. Extirpate petty curiosities of apparel, lodging, diet, and learn to be indifferent in circumstances; and if you be apt to be transported with such little things, do some great thing, that shall cut off their frequent intervening. 7. Do not multiply secular cares, and troublesome negotiations, which have variety of conversation with several humours of men, and accidents of things; but frame to thyself a life, simple as thou canst, and free from all affectations. 8. Sweeten thy temper, and allay the violence of thy spirit, with some convenient, natural, temperate, and medicinal solaces; for some dispositions we have seen inflamed into anger, and often assaulted by peevishness, through immoderate fasting and inconvenient austerities. 9. A gentle answer is an excellent remora to the progresses of anger, whether in thyself

or others. For anger is like the waves of a troubled sea; when it is corrected with a soft reply, as with a little strand, it retires, and leaves nothing behind it but froth and shells; no permanent mischief[t]. 10. Silence is an excellent art: and that was the advantage which St. Isaac[u], an old religious person in the primitive church, is reported to have followed; to suppress his anger within his breast, and use what means he could there to strangle it, but never permitting it to go forth in language. Anger and lust being like fire, which if you enclose, suffering it to have no emission, it perishes and dies; but give it the smallest vent, and it rages to a consumption of all it reaches. And this advice is coincident with the general rule which is prescribed in all temptations, that anger be suppressed in its cradle and first assaults[x]. 11. Lastly: let every man be careful, that in his repentance, or in his zeal, or his religion, he be as dispassionate and free from anger as possible; lest anger pass upon him in a reflex act, which was rejected in the direct. Some mortifiers, in their contestation against anger, or any evil or troublesome principle, are like criers of assizes, who, calling for silence, make the greatest noise; they are extremely angry, when they are fighting against the habit or violent inclinations to anger.

36. But, in the way of more strict religion, it is advised, that he who would cure his anger should pray often. It is St. Austin's counsel to the bishop Auxilius, that, like the apostles in a storm, we should awaken Christ, and call to him for aid, lest we shipwreck in so violent passions and impetuous disturbances. 2. Propound to thyself the example of meek and patient persons; remembering always, that there is a family of meek saints, of which Moses is the precedent; a family of patient saints, under the conduct of Job. Every one in the mountain of the Lord shall be gathered to his own tribe, to his own family, in the great day of jubilee: and the

[t] Terminum etiam marinis fluctibus fabricator descripsit; arena maris exigua sæpe inter duas acies intercapedo est: si reprimere iram non potes, memento quia indignabundum mare nil ultra spumam et fluctuationem effert. — *Simocatta.*

[u] Ex quo factus sum monachus, statui apud mè, ut iracundia extra guttur meum non procederet, dixit S. Isaac Eremita.

[x] Melius enim est negare primum iræ introitum, etiam de causa probabili satis et gloriosa, quàm admissam ejicere. — *S. Aug. ad Profuturum.*

angry shall perish with the effects of anger; and peevish persons shall be vexed with the disquietness of an eternal worm, and sting of a vexatious conscience, if they suffer here the transportations and saddest effects of an unmortified, habitual, and prevailing anger. 3. Above all things endeavour to be humble, to think of thyself as thou deservest, that is, meanly and unworthily; and in reason, it is to be presumed, thou wilt be more patient of wrong, quiet under affronts and injuries, susceptive of inconveniences, and apt to entertain all adversities, as instruments of humiliation, deleteries of vice, corrections of indecent passions, and instruments of virtue. 4. All the reason, and all the relations, and all the necessities of mankind, are daily arguments against the violences and inordinations of anger. For he that would not have his reason confounded, or his discourse useless, or his family be a den of lions; he that would not have his marriage a daily duel, or his society troublesome, or his friendship formidable, or his feasts bitter; he that delights not to have his discipline cruel, or his government tyrannical, or his disputations violent, or his civilities unmannerly; or his charity be a rudeness, or himself brutish as a bear, or peevish as a fly, or miserable upon every accident, and in all the changes of his life, must mortify his anger. For it concerns us as much as peace, and wisdom, and nobleness, and charity, and felicity are worth, to be at peace in our breasts, and to be pleased with all God's providence, and to be in charity with every thing, and with every man.

The Seventh Commandment.

37. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." These two commandments are immediate to each other, and of the greatest cognation; for anger and lust work upon one subject; and the same fervours of blood which make men revengeful, will also make men unchaste[y]. But the prohibition is repeated in the words of the old commandment: so "it was said to

[y] Ubi furoris insederit virus, libidinis quoque incendium necesse est penetrare. — *Cassian.*

——— Numquid ego à te
Magno prognatam deposco Consule———
Velatamque stolâ, mea cùm conferbuit ira?
Horat. Serm. lib. i. *Sat.* 2.

them of old;" which was not only a prohibition of the violation of the rights of marriage, but was, even among the Jews, extended to signify all mixture of sexes not matrimonial. For adultery, in Scripture, is sometimes used to signify fornication, and fornication for adultery; as it is expressed in the permissions of divorce, in the case of fornication: and by Moses's law, fornication also was forbidden; and it was hated also, and reproved, in the natural. But it is very probable, that this precept was restrained only to the instance of adultery in the proper sense, that is, violation of marriage; for Moses did, in other annexes of the law, forbid fornication. And as a blow or wound was not esteemed, in Moses's law, a breach of the sixth commandment; so neither was any thing but adultery esteemed a violation of the seventh, by very many of their own doctors: of which I reckon this a sufficient probation, because they permitted stranger virgins and captives to fornicate; only they believed it sinful in the Hebrew maidens. And when two harlots pleaded before Solomon for the bastard-child, he gave sentence of their question, but nothing of their crime. Strangers[z], with the Hebrews, signified, many times, harlots; because they were permitted to be such, and were entertained to such purposes. But these were the licenses of a looser interpretation; God having, to all nations, given sufficient testimony of his detestation of all concubinate not hallowed by marriage: of which, among the nations, there was abundant testimony; in that the harlots were not permitted to abide in the cities, and wore veils, in testimony of their shame and habitual indecencies; which we observe in the story of Thamar[a], and also Chrysippus. And, although it passed without punishment, yet never without shame, and a note of turpitude. And the abstinence from fornication was one of the precepts of Noah, to which the Jews obliged the stranger-proselytes, who were only proselytes of the house: and the apostles enforce it upon the Gentiles, in their first decree at Jerusalem, as renewing an old stock of precepts and obligations, in which all the converted and religious Gentiles did communicate with the Jews.

[z] Ξένας vocârunt Græci meretrices et peregrinas, ad morem et ad verbum Hebræorum; et Menandrum transferens, Terentius peregrinam vocat Andriam.

[a] Gen. xxxviii. 14.

38. To this Christ added, that the eyes must not be adulterous; his disciples must not only abstain from the act of unlawful concubinate, but from the impurer intuition of a wife of another man: so, according to the design of his whole sermon, opposing the righteousness of the Spirit to that of the law, or of works, in which the Jews confided. Christians must have chaste desires, not indulging to themselves a liberty of looser thoughts[b]; keeping the threshold of their temples pure, that the Holy Ghost may observe nothing unclean in the entry of his habitation. For he that lusts after a woman wants nothing to the consummation of the act but some convenient circumstances; which, because they are not in our power, the act is impeded, but nothing of the malice abated. But so severe in this was our blessed Master, that he commanded us rather to "put our eyes out," than to suffer them to become an offence to us, that is, an inlet of sin, or an invitation or transmission of impurity; by "putting our eyes out," meaning the extinction of all incentives of lust, the rejection of all opportunities and occasions, the quitting all conditions of advantage which ministers fuel to this hell-fire. And by this severity we must understand all beginnings, temptations, likenesses, and insinuations and minutes of lust and impurity, to be forbidden to Christians; such as are all morose delectations in vanity, wanton words, gestures, balls, revellings, wanton diet, garish and lascivious dressings and trimmings of the body, looser banquetings: all "making provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it," all lust of concupiscence, and all "lust of the eye," and all lust of the hand, unclean contracts, are to be rescinded, all lust of the tongue and palate, all surfeiting and drunkenness: for it is impossible to keep the spirit pure, if it be exposed to all the entertainment of enemies. And if Christ forbade the wanton eye, and placed it under the prohibition of adultery, it is certain, whatsoever ministers to that vice, and invites to

[b] Nihil refert quibus membris adulteraveris, dixit Archesilaus philosophus. — *Plutarch.*

Ἀρχὴ τοῦ ἔρωτος ὅρασις. — *Plato.*

Ut jam servaris bene corpus, adultera mens est:
Omnibus exclusis intus adulter erit. — *Ovid.*

Incesta est etiam sine stupro quæ stuprum quærit. — *Seneca.*

Πόθεν ποτ' ἄρα γίνεται μοιχῶν γένος; ἐκ κριθιῶντος ἀνδρὸς ἐν ἀφροδισίοις. — *Cleanthes.*

it, is within the same restraint; it is the eye, or the hand, or the foot, that is to be cut off. To this commandment fastings and severe abstinences are apt to be reduced, as being the proper abscission of the instruments and temptations of lust, to which Christ invites by the mixed proposition of threatening and reward; for "better it is to go to heaven with but one eye, or one foot," that is, with a body half nourished, than with full meals and an active lust to "enter into hell." And in this our blessed Lord is a Physician rather than a Lawgiver: for abstinence from all impure concubinate, and morose delectations so much as in thought, being the commandment of God; that Christ bids us retrench the occasions and insinuations of lust, it is a facilitating the duty, not a new severity, but a security and caution of prudence.

The Eighth Commandment.

39. "Thou shalt not steal." To this precept Christ added nothing; because God had already, in the decalogue, fortified this precept with a restraint upon the desires[c]. For the tenth commandment forbids all coveting of our neighbour's goods[d]: for the wife there reckoned, and forbidden to be desired from another man, is not a restraint of libidinous appetite, but of the covetous; it being accounted part of wealth to have a numerous family, many wives, and many servants: and this also God, by the prophet Nathan, upbraided to David, as an instance of David's wealth and God's liberality. But yet this commandment Christ adopted into his law, it being prohibited by the natural law, or the law of right reason, commonwealths not being able to subsist without distinction of dominion, nor industry to be encouraged but by propriety, nor families to be maintained but by defence of just rights and truly purchased possessions. And this prohibition extends to all injustice, whether done by force or fraud; whether it be by ablation, or prevention,

[c] Crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops,
Nec sitim pellit, nisi causa morbi
Fugerit venis, et aquosus albo
Corpore languor. — *Horat.* lib. ii. *Od.* 2.

[d] Ὁ γὰρ τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις ἐπικεχηνὼς, κοινὸς πόλεως ἐχθρός· βουλήσει μὲν πάντων, δυνάμει δὲ τὰ τῶν τίνων ἀφαιρούμενος. — *Philo in Exposit. Gener.*

Κλοπὴ μὲν χρημάτων ἀνελεύθερον. — *Plato*, lib. x. *de Leg.*

Δὼς ἀγαθὴ, ἅρπαξ δὲ κακὴ, θανάτοιο δότειρα. — *Hesiod.* lib. i. Ἔργ.

or detaining of rights; any thing in which injury is done, directly or obliquely, to our neighbour's fortune[e].

The Ninth Commandment.

40. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." That is, thou shalt not answer in judgment against thy neighbour falsely[f]: which testimony, in the law, was given solemnly and by oath, invoking the name of God. "I adjure thee by God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ," said the high priest to the blessed Jesus, that is, speak upon thy oath; and then he told them fully, though they made it the pretence of murdering him, and he knew they would do so. Confessing and witnessing truth is giving glory to God: but false witness is high injustice, it is inhumanity and treason against the quietness, or life, or possession of a just person; it is in itself irregular and unreasonable, and, therefore, is so forbidden to Christians, not only as it is unjust, but as it is false. For a lie in communication and private converse is also forbidden, as well as unjust testimony[g]; "Let every man speak truth with his neighbour[h]," that is, in private society: and whether a lie be in jest or earnest, when the purpose is to deceive and abuse, though in the smallest instance, it is in that degree criminal as it is injurious[i]. I find not the same affirmed in every deception of our neighbours, wherein no man is injured, and some are benefited; the error of the affirmation being nothing but a natural irregularity, nothing malicious, but very charitable. I find no severity superadded by Christ to this commandment, prohibiting such discourse, which, without injury to any man, deceives a man into piety or safety. But this is to be extended no farther: in

[e] Paulus J. C. lib. i. D. de Furtis. Ulpian. l. Probrum, D. de Verborum Significatione.

[f] Οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ ψεύδεσσι πατὴρ Ζεὺς ἔσσετ' ἀρωγός. — *Homer.* lib. iv. *Il.*

Ὅς δέ κε μαρτυρίῃσιν ἑκὼν ἐπίορκον ὀμόσσας
Ψεύσεται, ἐν δέ δίκην βλάψας, νήκεστον ἄάσθη,
Τοῦ δὲ τ' ἀμαυροτέρη γενεὴ μετόπισθε λέλειπται. — *Hesiod.* lib. i. Ἔργ.

[g] Ἀλήθειά ἐστι μεγάλη ἀρχὴ τῆς ἀρετῆς. — *Pind.*

Ψεῦδος δὲ μισεῖ πᾶς φρόνιμος καὶ σοφός. — *Menand.*

[h] Ephes. iv. 25.

[i] Epaminondam ne joco quidem mentitum fuisse narrant fidi scriptores. — *Probus.*

Idem de Aristide refert Plutarchus.

all things else we must be severe in our discourses, and "neither lie in a great matter nor a small, for the custom thereof is not good," saith the son of Sirach. I could add, concerning this precept, that Christ, having left it in that condition he found it in the decalogue, without any change or alteration of circumstance, we are commanded to give true testimony in judgment; which, because it was under an oath, there lies upon us no prohibition, but a severity of injunction, to swear truth in judgment when we are required. The securing of testimonies was by the sanctity of an oath, and this remains unaltered in Christianity.

The Tenth Commandment.

41. "Thou shalt not covet." This commandment we find nowhere repeated in the Gospel by our blessed Saviour; but it is inserted in the repetition of the second table, which St. Paul mentioned to the Romans: for it was so abundantly expressed in the enclosures of other precepts[k], and the whole design of Christ's doctrine, that it was less needful specially to express that which is every where affixed to many precepts evangelical. Particularly it is inherent in the first beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" and it means, that we should not wish our neighbour's goods with a deliberate entertained desire, but that, upon the commencement of the motion, it be disbanded instantly: for he that does not at the first address and incitement of the passion suppress it, he hath given it that entertainment which, in every period of staying, is a degree of morose delectation in the appetite. And to this I find not Christ added any thing; for the law itself, forbidding to entertain the desire, hath commanded the instant and present suppression; they are the same thing, and cannot reasonably be distinguished. Now that Christ, in the instance of adultery, hath commanded to abstain also from occasions and accesses towards the lust, this hath not the same severity; because the

[k] Furtum quoque sine ulla attrectatione fieri posse solâ mente, atque animo ut furtum fiat annitente. — *A. Gell.* lib. xi. c. 18.

Has patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas.
Nam scelus intra se tantùm qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet. ——— *Juvenal.*

Non minùs esse turpe oculos quàm pedes in aliena immittere, dixit Xenocrates.

vice of covetousness is not such a wild fire as lust is, not inflamed by contact, and neighbourhood of all things in the world: every thing may be instrumental to libidinous desires, but to covetous appetites there are not temptations of so different natures.

42. Concerning the order of these commandments, it is not unusefully observed, that, if we account from the first to the last, they are of greatest perfection which are last described; and he who is arrived to that severity and dominion of himself, as not to desire his neighbour's goods, is very far from actual injury, and so in proportion; it being the least degree of religion to confess but one God. But, therefore, vices are to take their estimate in the contrary order: he that prevaricates the first commandment is the greatest sinner in the world; and the least is he that only covets without any actual injustice. And there is no variety or objection in this, unless it be altered by the accidental difference of degrees; but in the kinds of sin the rule is true: this only, the sixth and seventh are otherwise in the Hebrew Bibles than ours, and in the Greek otherwise in Exodus than in Deuteronomy; and, by this rule, it is a greater sin to commit adultery than to kill; concerning which we have no certainty, save that St. Paul, in one respect, makes the sin of uncleanness the greatest of any sin, whose scene lies in the body: "Every sin is without the body, but he that commits fornication sins against his own body."

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, wisdom of the Father, thou light of Jews and Gentiles, and the great Master of the world, who, by thy holy sermons and clearest revelations of the mysteries of thy Father's kingdom, didst invite all the world to great degrees of justice, purity, and sanctity, and instruct us all in a holy institution, give us understanding of thy laws; that, the light of thy celestial doctrine illuminating our darknesses, and making bright all the recesses of our spirits and understandings, we may direct our feet, all the lower man, the affections of the inferior appetite, to walk in the paths of thy commandments. Dearest God, make us to live a life of religion and justice, of love and duty;

that we may adore thy majesty, and reverence thy name, and love thy mercy, and admire thy infinite glories and perfections, and obey thy precepts. Make us to love thee for thyself, and our neighbours for thee; make us to be all love and all duty: that we may adorn the Gospel of thee, our Lord, walking worthy of our vocation; that, as thou hast called us to be thy disciples, so we may walk therein, doing the work of faithful servants, and may receive the adoption of sons, and the gift of eternal glory, which thou hast reserved for all the disciples of thy holy institution. Make all the world obey thee as a Prophet; that, being redeemed and purified by thee, our High Priest, all may reign with thee, our King, in thy eternal kingdom, O eternal Jesus, Wisdom of thy Father. Amen.

OF THE THREE ADDITIONAL PRECEPTS WHICH CHRIST SUPERINDUCED, AND MADE PARTS OF THE CHRISTIAN LAW.

DISCOURSE XI.

Of Charity, with its Parts, Forgiving, Giving, not Judging.

OF FORGIVENESS.—PART I.

1. THE holy Jesus coming to reconcile all the world to God, would reconcile all the parts of the world one with another, that they may rejoice in their common band and their common salvation. The first instance of charity forbade to Christians all revenge of injuries; which was a perfection and endearment of duty beyond what either most of the old philosophers, or the laws of the nations, or of Moses, ever

[a] Plutarchus tamen multa præclara dicit de charitate erga inimicos. "Simplicitati et magnanimitati atque bonitati plus loci hic est quàm in amicitiis — Oblatâ occasione ulciscendi inimicum, eum missum facere æquanimitatis est. Qui verò miseratur inimicum afflictum, et opem fert indigenti, et filiis ejus ac familiæ adverso ipsorum tempore operam suam studiumque defert, hunc qui non amat, huic pectus atrum est atque adamantinum," &c.—*De Cup. ex Inim. Utilit.*

Et Cicero dixit Cæsari; Pompeii statuas restituendo, tuas defixisti.

practised or enjoined. For revenge was esteemed to unhallowed, unchristian natures, as sweet as life, a satisfaction of injuries, and the only cure of maladies and affronts. Only, laws of the wisest commonwealths commanded that revenge should be taken by the judge; a few cases being excepted, in which, by sentence of the law, the injured person, or his nearest relative, might be the executioner of the vengeance: as among the Jews, in the case of murder; among the Romans, in the case of an adulteress or a ravished daughter, the father might kill the adulteress or the ravisher. In other things the judge only was to be the avenger. But Christ commanded his disciples, rather than to take revenge, to expose themselves to a second injury, rather "offer the other cheek," than be avenged for a blow on this; "for vengeance belongs to God," and he will retaliate: and to that "wrath we must give place," saith St. Paul[b]; that is, "in well-doing" and evil-suffering "commit ourselves to his righteous judgment," leaving room for his execution, who will certainly do it, if we snatch not the sword from his arm.

2. But some observe, that our blessed Saviour instanced but in smaller injuries: he that bade us suffer a blow on the cheek, did not oblige us tamely to be sacrificed; he that enjoined us to put up the loss of our coat and cloak, did not signify his pleasure to be, that we should suffer our family to be turned out of doors, and our whole estate aliened and cancelled, especially we being otherwise obliged to provide for them under the pain of the curse of infidelity. And indeed there is much reason our defences may be extended, when the injuries are too great for our sufferance, or that our defence bring no greater damage to the other than we divert from ourselves. But our blessed Saviour's prohibition is instanced in such small particulars, which are no limitations of the general precept, but particulars of common considera-

Justitiæ primum munus est, ut ne cui noceas, nisi lacessitus injuriâ.—*Cic. de Offic.*

Exod. xxi. 23. Levit. xxiv. 20. Deut. xix. 21.

Idcirco judiciorum vigor, jurisque publici tutela videtur in medio constituta, ne quisquam sibi ipsi permittere valeat ultionem.—*Honor. et Theod. in Cod. Theodos.*

[b] Rom. xii. 19.

tion. "But I say unto you, resist not evil[c]:" so our English Testament reads it; but the word signifies "avenge not evil;" and it binds us to this only, that we be not avengers of the wrong, but rather suffer twice, than once to be avenged. He that is struck on the face may run away, or may divert the blow, or bind the hand of his enemy; and he whose coat is snatched away, may take it again, if without injury to the other he may do it. We are sometimes bound to "resist evil:" every clearing of our innocence, refuting of calumnies, quitting ourselves of reproach, is a resisting evil; but such which is hallowed to us by the example of our Lord himself and his apostles. But this precept is clearly expounded by St. Paul: "Render not evil for evil[d];" that is, be not revenged. You may either secure or restore yourselves to the condition of your own possessions or fame, or preserve your life, provided that no evil be returned to him that offers the injury. For so sacred are the laws of Christ, so holy and great is his example, so much hath he endeared us who were his enemies, and so frequently and severely hath he preached and enjoined forgiveness, that he who knows not to forgive, knows not to be like a Christian, and a disciple of so gentle a Master.

3. So that the smallness or greatness of the instance alters not the case in this duty: in the greatest matters we are permitted only to an innocent defence, in the smallest we may do so too: I may as well hold my coat fast as my gold, and I may as well hide my goods as run away, and that is a defence; and if my life be in danger, I must do no more but defend myself: save only that defence, in case of life, is of a larger signification than in case of goods. I may wound my enemy, if I cannot else be safe; I may disarm him, or in any sense disable him; and this is extended even to a liberty to kill him, if my defence necessarily stands upon so hard conditions: for although I must not give him a wound for a wound[e], because that cannot cure me, but is certainly revenge; yet, when my life cannot be otherwise safe than by killing him, I have used that liberty which nature hath permitted

[c] Μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ sumitur sensu generali pro omni retaliatione.

[d] Rom. xii. 17.

[e] Succurram perituro, sed ut ipse non peream; nisi si futurus ero magni hominis aut magnæ rei merces. — *Sen.*

me, and Christ hath not forbidden, who only interdicted revenge, and forbade no defence which is charitable and necessary, and not blended with malice and anger. And it is as much charity to preserve myself as him, when I fear to die.

4. But although we find this nowhere forbidden, yet it is very consonant to the excellent mercy of the Gospel, and greatly laudable, if we choose rather to lose our life, in imitation of Christ, than save it by the loss of another's, in pursuance of the permissions of nature. When nature only gives leave, and no lawgiver gives command to defend our lives, and the excellence of Christianity highly commends dying for our enemies, and propounds to our imitation the greatest example that ever could be in the world; it is a very great imperfection, if we choose not rather to obey an insinuation of the holy Jesus, than with greediness and appetite pursue the bare permissions of nature. But in this we have no necessity. Only this is to be read with two cautions: 1. So long as the assaulted person is in actual danger, he must use all arts and subterfuges which his wit or danger can supply him with, as passive defence, flight, arts of diversion, entreaties, soft and gentle answers, or whatsoever is in its kind innocent, to prevent his sin and my danger; that when he is forced to his last defence, it may be certain he hath nothing of revenge mingled in so sad a remedy. 2. That this be not understood to be a permission to defend our lives against an angry and unjust prince[f]: for if my lawful prince should attempt my life with rage, or with the abused solemnities of law; in the first case the sacredness of his person, in the second, the reverence and religion of authority, are his defensatives, and immure him, and bind my hands, that I must not lift them up, but to Heaven, for my own defence and his pardon.

5. But the vain pretences of vainer persons have here made a question where there is no scruple; and if I may defend my life with the sword, or with any thing which nature and the laws forbid not, why not also mine honour, which is as dear as life, which makes my life without con-

[f] Privatas inimicitias, non principis, ulciscar, dixit Tiberius. — *Tacit. Annal.* lib. iii.

tempt, useful to my friend, and comfortable to myself? For to be reputed a coward, a baffled person, and one that will take affronts, is to be miserable and scorned, and to invite all insolent persons to do me injuries. May I not be permitted to fight for mine honour, and to wipe off the stains of my reputation? Honour is as dear as life, and sometimes dearer. To this I have many things to say. For that which men in this question call honour, is nothing but a reputation amongst persons vain, unchristian in their deportment, empty and ignorant souls, who count that the standard of honour which is the instrument of reprobation; as if to be a gentleman were to be no Christian. They that have built their reputation upon such societies, must take new estimates of it, according as the wine, or fancy, or custom, or some great fighting person, shall determine it; and whatsoever invites a quarrel is a rule of honour. But then it is a sad consideration to remember, that it is accounted honour not to recede from any thing we have said or done: it is honour not to take the lie, in the meantime it is not dishonourable to lie indeed, but to be told so; and not to kill him that says it, and venture my life and his too, that is a forfeiture of reputation. A mistress's favour, an idle discourse, a jest, a jealousy, a health, a gaiety, any thing must engage two lives in hazard, and two souls in ruin; or else they are dishonoured. As if a life, which is so dear to a man's self, which ought to be dear to others, which all laws, and wise princes, and states, have secured by the circumvallation of laws and penalties, which nothing but heaven can recompense for the loss of, which is the breath of God, which to preserve Christ died, the Son of God died; as if this were so contemptible a thing, that it must be ventured for satisfaction of a vicious person, or a vain custom, or such a folly which a wise and a severe person had rather die than be guilty of. Honour is from him that honours: now certainly God and the king are the fountains of honour; right reason and religion, the Scripture and the laws, are the best rules of estimating honour: and if we offer to account our honours by the senseless and illiterate discourses of vain and vicious persons, our honour can be no greater than the fountain from whence it is derivative; and at this rate Harpaste, Seneca's wife's fool, might have declared Thersites an honourable person,

and every bold gladiator in a Roman theatre, or a fighting rebel among the slaves of Sparta, or a trooper of Spartacus's guard, might have stood upon their honour upon equal and as fair a challenge. Certainly there is no greater honour than to be like the holy Jesus; and he is delectable in the eyes of God, and so are all his relatives and followers, by participation of his honour; and nothing can be more honourable than to do wise and excellent actions, according to the account of Divine and human laws: and if either God or the king can derive honour upon their subjects, then whatsoever is contrary to that which they honour must needs be base, dishonourable, and inglorious.

6. But if we be troubled for fear of new and succeeding injuries, and will needs fight, and, as much as lies in us, kill our brother to prevent an injury[s], nothing can be more unworthy of a Christian, nothing can be more inhuman. Cato, pleading in the Roman senate in the behalf of the Rhodian ambassadors, who came to beg peace of the commonwealth, which had entertained an anger and some thoughts of war against them, upon pretence that the Rhodians would war with them when they durst, discoursed severely and prudently against such unreasonable purposes. And the life of men, and the interest of states, is not like the trade of fencers, whose lot is to conquer if they strike first, to die if they be prevented: man's life is not established upon so unequal and unreasonable necessities, that either we must first do an injury, or else it is certain we must receive a mischief. God's providence and care, in his government of the world, is more vigilant and merciful; and he protects persons innocent and just in all cases, except when he means to make an injury the instrument of a grace, or a violent death to be the gate of glory. It was not ill answered of Merope to king Polyphontes, who therefore killed his brother, because he had entertained a purpose to have killed him: "You should only have done the same injury to him which he did to you; you should still have had a purpose to kill

[s] Εἰ γὰρ σ' ἔμελλεν, ὡς σὺ φὴς, κτείνειν πόσις,
Χρὴ καὶ σὲ μέλλειν, ὡς χρόνος δοῦναι παρῇ.—*Eurip.*

Quis hoc statuit unquam, aut cui concedi sine summo omnium periculo potest, ut eum jure potuerit occidere, à quo metuisse se dicat ne ipse posteriùs occideretur?—*Cicero.*

him:" for his injustice went no farther; and it is hard to requite ill and uncertain purposes with actual murder, especially when we are as much secured by the power of laws, as the whole commonwealth is, in all its greatest interests. And, therefore, for Christians to kill a man to prevent being baffled or despised, is to use an extreme desperate remedy, infinitely painful and deadly, to prevent a little griping in the belly, foreseen as possible to happen, it may be, three years after. But besides, this objection supposes a disease almost as earnestly to be cured as this of the main question; for it represents a man keeping company with lewd and debauched persons, spending his time in vanity, drunken societies, or engaged in lust, or placing his scene amongst persons apt to do affronts and unworthy misdemeanours; and indeed an affront, an injury, a blow, or a loud disgrace, is not the consequent of not fighting, but a punishment for engaging in loose, baser, and vicious company. If the gallants of the age would find an honest and a noble employment, or would be delicate in the choice of their friends and company, or would be severe in taking accounts of themselves and of their time, would live as becomes persons wise and innocent, that is, like Christians, they would soon perceive themselves removed far from injuries, and yet farther from trouble, when such levities of mischance or folly should intervene. But suppose a man affronted or disgraced, it is considerable whether the man deserved it or not. If he did, let him entertain it for his punishment, and use it for an instrument of correction and humility: if he did not, as an instance of fortitude and despite of lower things. But to venture lives to abolish a past act, is madness, unless in both those lives there was not good enough to be esteemed greater, and of better value, than the light affront had in it of misery and trouble. Certainly those persons are very unfortunate, in whose lives much more pleasure is not than there is mischief in a light blow, or a lighter affront, from a vain or an angry person. But suppose there were not, yet how can fighting or killing my adversary wipe off my aspersion, or take off my blow, or prove that I did not lie? For it is but an ill argument to say, If I dare kill him, then I did not lie; or if I dare fight, then he struck me not; or if I dare venture damnation, then I am an honourable person. And yet farther, who gave me power

over my own life, or over the life of another, that I shall venture my own, and offer to take his? God and God's vicegerent only are the lords of lives; who made us judges, and princes, or gods? and if we be not such, we are murderers and villains. When Moses would have parted the duellists that fought in Egypt, the injurious person asked him, "Who made thee a judge or ruler over us? Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?" meaning, he had no power to kill, none to judge of life and death, unless he had been made a ruler. Yea, but flesh and blood cannot endure a blow or a disgrace. Grant that too; but take this into the account, "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God." And yet, besides this, those persons have but a tender stock of reason, and wisdom, and patience, who have not discourse enough to make them bear an injury[h], which the philosophy of the Gentiles, without the light of Christianity, taught them to tolerate with so much equanimity and dispassionate entertainment. That person is not a man, who knows not how to suffer the inconvenience of an accident and indiscretion of light persons; or if he could not, yet certainly that is a mad impatience, when a man, to remedy the pain of a drop of scalding water, shall drench himself in the liquid flames of pitch and a bituminous bath.

7. Truth is, to fight a duel is a thing that all kingdoms are bound to restrain with highest severity; it is a consociation of many the worst acts that a person ordinarily can be guilty of; it is want of charity, of justice, of humility, of trust in God's providence; it is therefore pride, and murder, and injustice, and infinite unreasonableness, and nothing of a Christian, nothing of excuse, nothing of honour in it, if God and wise men be admitted judges of the lists. And it would be considered, that every one that fights a duel must reckon himself as dead or dying, (for however any man flatters himself by saying he will not kill, if he could avoid it; yet rather than be killed he will, and to the danger of being killed his own act exposes him:) now, is it a good posture for a man to die with a sword in his hand, thrust at his brother's breast, with a purpose, either explicit or implicit, to

[h] Οὗτος κράτιστός ἐστ' ἀνὴρ,————
"Οστις ἀδικεῖσθαι πλεῖστ' ἐπίσταται βροτῶν. — *Menand.*

have killed him? Can a man die twice, that, in case he miscarries and is damned for the first ill dying, he may mend his fault, and die better the next time? Can his vain, imaginary, and fantastic shadow of reputation, make him recompense for the disgrace and confusion of face, and pains and horrors of eternity? Is there no such thing as forgiving injuries, nothing of the discipline of Jesus in our spirits? are we called by the name of Christ, and have nothing in us but the spirit of Cain, and Nimrod, and Joab? If neither reason nor religion can rule us, neither interest nor safety can determine us, neither life nor eternity can move us, neither God nor wise men be sufficient judges of honour to us; then our damnation is just, but it is heavy; our fall is certain, but it is cheap, base, and inglorious. And let not the vanities, or the gallants of the world, slight this friendly monition, rejecting it with a scorn, because it is talking like a divine: it were no disparagement if they would do so too, and believe accordingly; and they would find a better return of honour in the crowns of eternity by talking like a divine, than by dying like a fool; by living in imitation and obedience to the laws of the holy Jesus, than by perishing, or committing murder, or by attempting it, or by venturing it, like a weak, impotent, passionate, and brutish person. Upon this chapter it is sometimes asked, whether a virgin may not kill her ravisher to defend her chastity? Concerning which, as we have no special and distinct warrant, so there is, in reason and analogy of the Gospel, much for the negative. For since his act alone cannot make her criminal, and is no more than a wound in my body, or a civil or a natural inconvenience, it is unequal to take a life in exchange for a lesser injury, and it is worse that I take it myself. Some great examples we find in story, and their names are remembered in honour; but we can make no judgment of them, but that their zeal was reprovable for its intemperance, though it had excellency in the matter of the passion.

8. But if we may not secure our honour, or be revenged for injuries by the sword, may we not crave the justice of the law, and implore the vengeance of the judge, who is appointed "for vengeance against evil doers?" and the judge being the king's officer, and the king God's vicegerent, it is no more than imploring God's hand; and that is "giving

place to wrath," which St. Paul speaks of, that is, permitting all to the Divine justice. To this I answer, that it is not lawful to go to law for every occasion or slighter injury, because it is very distant from the mercies, forgiveness, and gentleness of a Christian, to contest for trifles[i]; and it is certain that the injuries, or evil, or charges of trouble and expense, will be more vexatious and afflictive to the person contested, than a small instance of wrong is to the person injured. And it is a great intemperance of anger and impotence of spirit, a covetousness and impatience, to appeal to the judge for determination concerning a lock of camels' hair, or a goat's beard; I mean any thing that is less than the gravity of laws, or the solemnity of a court, and that does not outweigh the inconveniences of a suit. But this we are to consider in the expression of our blessed Saviour, "If a man will sue thee at the law, and take thy cloak, let him have thy coat also[k]." Which words are a particular instance in pursuit of the general precept, "Resist not," or "avenge not, evil." The primitive Christians (as it happens in the first fervours of a discipline) were sometimes severe in observation of the letter, not subtly distinguishing counsels from precepts, but swallowing all the words of Christ without chewing or discrimination. They abstained from tribunals[l], unless they were forced thither by persecutors; but went not thither to repeat their goods. And if we consider suits of law as they are wrapped in circumstances of action and practice, with how many subtleties and arts they are managed, how pleadings are made mercenary, and that it will be hard to find right counsel that shall advise you to desist, if your cause be wrong, (and therefore there is great reason to distrust every question, since, if it be never so wrong, we shall meet advocates to encourage us and plead for it[m],)

[i] Σχέτλιοι ἄνθρωποι ——————————
Πόων ἐκ τ' ἐρίδων καὶ λεσχομάχων ἀπαλάμησθε
Ἄνθρωποι, κενεῆς διήσιος ἔμπλεοι ἀσκοί. — *Timon Phlias.*

Inhumanum verbum est, at quidem pro justo receptum, ultio; et à contumelia non differt nisi ordine. Qui dolorem regerit, tantùm excusatiùs peccat. — *Seneca*, lib. ii. *de Ira*, c. 32.

[k] Matt. v. 40. [l] Οὐ διαζονται τοῖς ἁρπάζουσι. — *Athenag.*

[m] Nam lucrosæ hujus et sanguinantis eloquentiæ usus recens, et malis moribus natus, atque in locum teli repertus. — *Quintil. de Orator.*

His qui bene facta canerent, non qui malè admissa defenderent, angustior honor apud deos. — *Idem.*

what danger of miscarriages, of uncharitableness, anger, and animosities, what desires to prevail, what care and fearfulness of the event, what innumerable temptations do intervene, how many sins are secretly insinuated in our hearts and actions; if a suit were of itself never so lawful, it would concern the duty of a Christian to avoid it, as he prays against temptations, and cuts off the opportunities of a sin. It is not lawful for a Christian to sue his brother at the law, unless he can be patient if he loses, and charitable if he be wronged, and can prosecute his end without any mixture of covetousness, or desires to prevail without envy, or can believe himself wrong when his judge says he is, or can submit to peace when his just cause is oppressed, and rejected, and condemned, and, without pain or regret, can sit down by the loss of his right, and of his pains and his money. And if he can do all this, what need he go to law? He may, with less trouble and less danger, take the loss singly, and expect God's providence for reparation, than disentitle himself to that by his own frowardness, and take the loss when it comes laden with many circumstances of trouble.

9. But however by accident it may become unlawful to go to law in a just cause, or in any, yet by this precept we are not forbidden. To go to law for revenge we are simply forbidden, that is, to return evil for evil; and therefore all those suits which are for vindictive sentences[n], not for reparative, are directly criminal. To follow a thief to death, for spoiling my goods, is extremely unreasonable and uncharitable; for as there is no proportion between my goods and his life, (and therefore I demand it to his evil and injury,) so the putting him to death repairs not my estate: the first makes it in me to be unjust, the latter declares me malicious and revengeful. If I demand an eye for an eye, his eye extinguished will not enlighten mine; and therefore, to prosecute him to such purposes, is to resist or render evil with evil, directly against Christ's sermon. But if the postulation of sentence be in order only to restore myself, we find it

[n] Nova lex non se vindicat ultione gladii, *i. e.* privatus Christianus vindictam nunquam petit. — *Tertull.*

permitted by St. Paul, who, when, for the scandal's sake, he forbade "going to law before unbelievers," and for the danger and temptation's sake, and the latent irregularity, which is certainly appendant to ordinary litigations, he is angry indefinitely with them that go to law; yet he adviseth that Christian arbitrators be appointed for decision of emergent questions. And therefore, when the supreme authority hath appointed and regularly established an arbitrator, the permission is the same. St. Paul° is angry, that among Christians there should be suits, but it is therefore he is chiefly angry because Christians do wrong; they who should rather suffer wrong, yet that they should do it, and defraud their brother, which in some sense enforces suits; that is it he highly blames. But when injustice is done, and a man is in a considerable degree defrauded, then it is permitted to him to repeat his own before Christian arbitrators, whether chosen by private consent or public authority; for that circumstance makes no essential alteration in the question: but then this must be done with as much simplicity and unmingled design as is possible, without any desire of rendering evil to the person of the offender, without arts of heightening the charge, without prolongation, devices, and arts of vexation, without anger and animosities; and then, although accidentally there is some appendant charge to the offending person, that is not accounted upon the stock of revenge, because it was not designed, and is not desired, and is cared for to prevent it as much as may be, and therefore offer was made of private and unchargeable arbitrators; and this being refused, the charge and accidental evil, if it be less than the loss of my sufferance and injury, must be reckoned to the necessities of affairs, and put upon the stock of his injustice, and will not affix a guilt upon the actor. I say, this is true, when the actor hath used all means to accord it without charge, and, when he is refused, manages it with as little as he can, and when it is nothing of his desire, but something of his trouble, that he cannot have his own without the lesser accidental evil to the offender, and that the question is great and weighty in his proportion; then a

° 1 Cor. vi. 1, &c.

suit of law is of itself lawful[p]. But then let it be remembered, how many ways afterwards it may become unlawful; and I have no more to add in this article but the saying of the son of Sirach, "He that loves danger shall perish in it." And certainly he had need be an angel that manages a suit innocently; and he that hath so excellent a spirit, as with innocence to run through the infinite temptations of a law-suit, in all probability hath so much holiness as to suffer the injury, and so much prudence as to avoid the danger: and therefore, nothing but a very great defalcation, or ruin of a man's estate, will, from the beginning to the end, justify such a controversy. When the man is put to it so, that he cannot do some other duty without venturing in this, then the grace of God is sufficient for him; but he that enters lightly shall walk dangerously, and a thousand to one but he will fall foully. "It is utterly a fault among you," said St. Paul, "because ye go to law one with another[q]." It is not always a crime, but ever a fault, and an irregularity, a recession from Christian perfection, and an entertaining of a danger, which though we escape through, yet it was a fault to have entered into it, when we might have avoided it. And even then when it is "lawful" for us, it is "not expedient[r]." For so the apostle sums up his reprehension concerning Christians going to law: We must "rather take wrong, rather suffer ourselves to be defrauded[s];" and when we cannot bear the burden of the loss, then, indeed, we are permitted to appeal to Christian judges; but then there are so many cautions to be observed, that, it may be, the remedy is worse than the disease. I only observe this one thing, that St. Paul permits it only in the instance of defraudation, or matter of interest; such as are defending of widows, and orphans, and churches, which, in estimation of law, are, by way of fiction, reckoned to be in pupilage and minority; add also repeating our own interests, when our necessities,

[p] Ὦ Πέρση, σὺ δὲ ταῦτα τεῷ ἐνὶ κάρθεο θυμῷ,
Μὴ δὲ σ' ἔρις κακόχαρτος ἀπ' ἔργου θυμὸν ἐρύκοι
Νείκε' ὀπιπτεύοντ', ἀγορῆς ἐπακουὸν ἐόντα·
Ὥρη γὰρ τ' ὀλίγη πέλεται νεικέων τ' ἀγορῶν τε
Ὅτῑνι μὴ βίος ἔνδον ἐπηετανὸς κατάκειται
Ὡραῖος ——— *Hesiod.* Ἔργ. καὶ Ἡμερ. lib. i.

[q] 1 Cor. vi. 7. Ὅλως ἥττημα, not παράπτωμα.

[r] Ver. 12. [s] Ver. 7.

or the support of our family and relatives, requires it: for all these are cases of charity or duty respectively. But besides the matter of defraudation, we find no instance expressed, nor any equality and parallel of reason, to permit Christians in any case to go to law; because, in other things, the sentence is but vindictive, and cannot repair us; and therefore demanding justice is a rendering evil in the proper matter of revenge. Concerning which I know no scruple but in an action of scandal and ill report. But because an innocent and an holy life will force light out of darkness, and humility, and patience, and waiting upon God, will bring glory out of shame; I suppose he who goes to law, to regain his credit, attempts the cure by incompetent remedies: if the accusation be public, the law will call him to an account, and then he is upon his defence, and must acquit himself with meekness and sincerity; but this allows not him to be the actor, for then it is rather a design of revenge than a proper deletery of his disgrace, and purgative of the calumny. For if the accusation can be proved, it was no calumny; if it be not proved, the person is not always innocent, and to have been accused leaves something foul in his reputation: and therefore, he that by law makes it more public, propagates his own disgrace, and sends his shame farther than his innocence, and the crime will go whither his absolution shall not arrive.

10. If it be yet farther questioned, whether it be lawful to pray for a revenge, or a punishment upon the offender, (I reckon them all one; he that prays for punishment of him that did him personal injury cannot easily be supposed to separate the punishment from his own revenge,) I answer, that although God be the avenger of all our wrongs, yet it were fit for us to have the affections of brethren, not the designs and purposes of a judge, but leave them to him to whom they are proper. When, in the bitterness of soul, an oppressed person curses sadly, and prays for vengeance, the calamity of the man and the violence of his enemy hasten a curse, and ascertain it. But whatever excuses the greatness of the oppression may make, I know not; but the bitterness of the spirit, besides that it is pitiable as it is a passion, yet it is violent and less Christian, as it is active and sends forth prayers. Woe is pronounced " to them by whom the

offence cometh;" yet we must "beware of offences," because by them we are engaged in a sin: and he that prays for a revenge hath a revengeful spirit, however it be restrained by laws and exterior tendernesses, from acting such dire purposes. And he that prays for revenge may indeed procure a justice to be done upon the injurious person; but oftentimes it happens then to fall on him when we least wish it, when we also have a conjunct interest in the other's preservation and escape: God so punishing the first wrong, that we also may smart for our uncharitable wishes. For the ground of all this discourse is, that it is part of Christian charity to forgive injuries [t]: which forgiveness of the injury, although it may reasonably enough stand with my fair and innocent requiring of my own, which goes no farther than a fair repetition; yet in no case can it stand with the acting and desiring revenge, which also, in the formality of revenge, can have no pretence of charity, because it is ineffective to my restitution. This discourse concerns private persons; whether it concern the question of war, and how far, is not proper for this consideration.

OF ALMS. — PART II.

1. But Christian charity hath its effect also in benefits as well as gentleness and innocence: "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth [a]." These are the precepts of the Lord, for the substance and the manner of alms, for the quantity and freeness of the donative, and the simplicity of him that gives; to which add those other words of his, "Sell your possessions, and give alms [b]." This precept, with its circumstances, was intended as a defensative against covetousness and prodigality, and a suppletory to make up the wants, and to make even the breaches of mankind: in which we shall best understand our obligation, if we consider in what proportion we must give alms, and to what persons, and in what manner.

[t] Injuriam qui tulit, oblivisci potest; qui fecit, nunquam. — *Tacit.*

[a] Matt. v. 42. vi. 3. [b] Luke, xii. 33.

2. First: For the quantity, we shall best take an estimate of it, if we remember the portion which God allows to Christians: "having food and raiment, let us be content with it[c]:" and our blessed Saviour, at the latter end of this sermon, stirs us up to confidence in God, and not to doubt our provisions, by telling that God "feeds the ravens, and clothes the lilies, and he will much rather do it to us," he will clothe us and feed us; no more is in the promise, no more is in our need: and, therefore, whatsoever is, beside our needs, natural and personal, that is, proportioning our needs to the condition of our life, and exigence of our calling, and quality of our person, all that can be spared from what we modestly and temperately spend in our support, and the supply of our families, and other necessary incidents, all that is to be spent in charity or religion. He defrauds the poor of their right, who detains from them beyond his own necessary, prudent, and convenient supplies[d], saith St. Hierom: and this is intended to be a retrenchment of all vain expenses, costly feasts, rich clothes, pompous retinue, and such excrescences of expense which, of themselves, serve no end of piety or just policy, but, by wise and temperate persons, are esteemed unnecessary, and without which the dignity and just value of the person may still be retained. Whatsoever is vainly spent was the portion of the poor[e]; whatsoever we lose in idle gaming, revelling, and wantonness of prodigality, was designed, by Christ, to refresh his own bowels, to fill the bellies of the poor; whatsoever lies in our repository useless and superfluous, all that is the poor man's inheritance: and certainly there is not any greater baseness than to suffer a man to perish, or be in extreme want of that which God gave me for him, and beyond my own needs. It is unthankfulness to God, it is unmercifulness to the poor, it is improvidence to ourselves[f], it is unfaithfulness in the dispensation of the money of which God made him but the steward, and his chest the bank for

[c] 1 Tim. vi. 8.

[d] Aliena rapere convincitur, qui ultra sibi necessaria retinere probatur. — *Gratian. Dist.* 42.

[e] Cur eget indignus quisquam te divite? — *Hor.* lib. ii. *Sat.* 2. James, v. 2, 3.

[f] Callidus effractâ nummos fur auferat arca:
Quas dederis, solas semper habebis opes. — *Martial.*

the exchange and issuing it to the indigent. And he that is unmerciful and unjust is extremely unlike God. But in taking this estimate concerning our excrescences, we are to proceed according to the rules of prudence, not making determinations in grains and scruples, but in the greater actions and accountable proportions of our estates. And if any man, seeing great necessities of indigent and calamitous persons, shall give beyond his ability[s], he had the Philippians for his precedent, and he hath God engaged for his payment, and a greater share in heaven for his reward. Only this; as we are to provide for ourselves, so also for our family, and the relatives of our charge and nearer endearments, not only with a provision of the present day's entertainment, but also for all nearer, probable, foreseen, and expected events, such as are portions for our children, dowries for our daughters: but this must not be extended to care and reservations for all possible and far distant events; but so much is to be permitted to the Divine providence as our present duty gives leave. In which, although a prudent guide and a sober reason are to make application to practice, yet the rule in general is, that by so much we are to relieve the poor, as we can deduct from such a portion of good things as God permits us to use for our own support, and reasonable and temporal conveniences of our person and condition; ever remembering, that if we increase in our estate, we also should increase in charity, that in this also may be verified what is written, "He that had much had nothing over, and he that had little had no lack." There is, in the quantity of these donatives, some latitude; but if we "sow sparingly," or if we scatter plentifully, so we shall reap: only we must be careful that no extreme necessity or biting want lies upon any poor man, whom we can relieve, without bringing such a want upon ourselves, which is less than the permissions of fortune which the mercies of God have permitted to us, that is, "food and raiment" proper for us. Under "food and raiment" all the necessaries of our life are to be understood: whatsoever is more than this is

[s] Hoc nam est maximum incentivum misericordiæ, ut compatiamur alienis calamitatibus quantum possumus, imò interdum plus quàm possumus. — *S. Ambr.* lib. ii. *de Offic.*

counsel and perfection; for which a proportionable reward is deposited in the treasures of eternity.

3. Secondly: If question be made concerning the persons who are to be the object of our alms, our rule is plain and easy; for nothing is required in the person suscipient and capable of alms, but that he be in misery and want, and unable to relieve himself. This last clause I insert in pursuance of that caution given to the church of Thessalonica by St. Paul, "If any one will not work, neither let him eat[h];" for we must be careful that our charity, which is intended to minister to poor men's needs, do not minister to idleness and the love of beggary, and a wandering, useless, and unprofitable life. But, abating this, there is no other consideration that can exempt any needy person from participation of your charity; not, though he be your enemy[i]; (for that is it which our blessed Saviour means in the appendix of this precept, "Love your enemies," that is, according to the exposition of the apostle, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink,") not, though he be an unbeliever; not, though he be a vicious person[k]; provided only that the vice be such to which your relief ministers no fuel, and adds no flame; and if the mere necessities of his nature be supplied, it will be a fair security against the danger; but if the vice be in the scene of the body, all freer comforts are to be denied him, because they are but incentives of sin, and angels of darkness. This I the rather insert, that the pride and supercilious austerities of some persons become not to them an instrument of excuse from ministering to needy persons, upon pretence their own sins brought them into that condition. For though the causes of our calamities are many times great secrets of Providence, yet suppose the poverty of the man was the effect of his prodigality, or other baseness, it matters not, as to our duty, how he came into it, but where he is; lest we also be denied a visit in our sicknesses, and a comfort in our sorrow, or a

[h] 2 Thess. iii. 10.

[i] Ὅταν δέῃ συγκινδυνεῦσαι φίλῳ ἢ πατρίδι, μὴ μαντεύεσθαι, εἰ συγκινδυνευτέον.
—— καὶ γὰρ ὁ Πύθιος ἐξέβαλε τοῦ ναοῦ τὸν οὐ βοηθήσαντα ἀναιρουμένῳ τῷ φίλῳ. — *Epict.* c. 39.

[k] Herodes Atticus, vir Consularis, quum palliatus quidam specie philosophi stipem emendicâsset, respondit, Demus huic aliquid æris cujusmodi est, tanquam homines, non tanquam homini. — *A. Gell.* lib. ix. c. 2.

counsel in our doubts, or aid in any distress, upon pretence that such sadness was procured by our sins: and ten to one but it was so. "Do good to all," saith the apostle, "but especially to the family of faith;" for to them our charity is most proper and proportioned: to all, viz. who are in need, and cannot relieve themselves; in which number persons that can work are not to be accounted. So that if it be necessary to observe an order in our charity, that is, when we cannot supply and suffice for all our opportunities of mercy, then "let not the brethren of our Lord go away ashamed;" and in other things observe the order and propriety of your own relations, and where there is otherwise no difference, the degree of the necessity is first to be considered[1]. This also, if the necessity be final and extreme, whatever the man be, he is first to be relieved, before the lesser necessities of the best persons or most holy poor. But the proper objects of our charity are old persons, sick or impotent, laborious and poor housekeepers, widows and orphans, people oppressed or persecuted for the cause of righteousness, distressed strangers, captives and abused slaves, prisoners of debt. To these we must be liberal, whether they be holy or unholy, remembering that we are sons of that Father who makes the dew of heaven to drop upon the dwellings of the righteous, and the fields of sinners.

4. Thirdly: The manner of giving alms is an office of Christian prudence; for in what instances we are to exemplify our charity, we must be determined by our own powers, and others' needs. The Scripture reckons entertaining strangers, visiting the sick, going to prisons, feeding and clothing the hungry and naked: to which, by the exigence of the poor, and the analogy of charity, many other are to be added. The holy Jesus, in the very precept, instanced in lending money to them that need to borrow; and he adds, "looking for nothing again," that is, if they be unable to

[1] ——— nunc sportula primo
Limine parva sedet turbæ rapienda togatæ.
Ille tamen faciem priùs inspicit, et trepidat ne
Suppositus venias, et falso nomine poscas. — *Juven. Satyr.* 1.
Οἱ τὰς ὀφρῦς αἴροντες ὡς ἀβίλτεροι,
Καὶ, Σκέψομαι, λέγοντες· ἄνθρωπος γὰρ ἦν
Σκέψῃ σὺ περὶ τοῦ, δυστυχὴς ὅταν τύχῃ. — *Menand.*

pay it[m]. Forgiving debts is a great instance of mercy, and a particular of excellent relief: but to imprison men for debt, when it is certain they are not able to pay it, and by that prison will be far more disabled, is an uncharitableness next to the cruelties of savages, and at infinite distance from the mercies of the holy Jesus.

OF NOT JUDGING.—PART III.

ANOTHER instance of charity our great Master inserted in this sermon, "not to judge our brother:" and this is a charity so cheap and so reasonable, that it requires nothing of us but silence in our spirits. We may perform this duty at the charge of a negative; if we meddle not with other men's affairs, we shall do them no wrong, and purchase to ourselves a peace, and be secured the rather from the unerring sentence of a severer judge. But this interdict forbids only such judging as is ungentle and uncharitable: in criminal causes, let us find all the ways to alleviate the burden of the man by just excuses, by extenuating or lessening accidents, by abatement of incident circumstances, by gentle sentences, and whatsoever can do relief to the person, that his spirit be not exasperated, that the crime be not the parent of impudence, that he be not insulted on, that he be invited to repentance, and, by such sweetnesses, he be led to his restitution. This also, in questions of doubts, obliges us to determine to the more favourable sense; and we also do need the same mercies, and, therefore, should do well, by our own rigour, not to disentitle ourselves to such possibilities and reserves of charity[n]. But it is foul and base, by detrac-

[m] Amicitiam si ad fructum nostrum referemus, non ad illius commoda quem diligimus, non erit ista amicitia, sed mercatura quædam utilitatum suarum: prata, et arva, et pecudum greges diliguntur isto modo, quòd fructus ex eis capiuntur; hominum charitas et amicitia gratuita est.—*Cicer. de Nat. Deor.* lib. i.

[n] Qui ne tuberibus propriis offendat amicum
Postulat, ignoscat verrucis illius: æquum est
Peccatis veniam poscentem, reddere rursus.—*Horat.* lib. i. *Sat.* 3.
Ne judices proximum, donec ad ejus locum pertingas.—*Prov. Judæor.*
——— elicu
Quàm temerè in nosmet legem sancimus iniquam!
Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur; optimus ille est
Qui minimis urgetur. *Horat, ibid.*

tion and iniquity, to blast the reputation of an honourable action, and the fair name of virtue with a calumny. But this duty is also a part of the grace of justice and of humility, and, by its relation and kindred to so many virtues, is furnished with so many arguments of amability and endearment.

THE PRAYER.

HOLY and merciful Jesus, who art the great principle and the instrument of conveying to us the charity and mercies of eternity, who didst love us when we were enemies, forgive us when we were debtors, recover us when we were dead, ransom us when we were slaves, relieve us when we were poor, and naked, and wandering, and full of sadness and necessities; give us the grace of charity, that we may be pitiful and compassionate of the needs of our necessitous brethren, that we may be apt to relieve them, and that, according to our duty and possibilities, we may rescue them from their calamities. Give us courteous, affable, and liberal souls; let us, by thy example, forgive our debtors, and love our enemies, and do to them offices of civility, and tenderness, and relief; always propounding thee for our pattern, and thy mercies for our precedent, and thy precepts for our rule, and thy Spirit for our guide: that we, showing mercy here, may receive the mercies of eternity by thy merits, and by thy charities, and dispensation, O holy and merciful Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE XII.

Of the second additional Precept of Christ; namely, of Prayer.

1. THE soul of a Christian is the house of God: "Ye are God's building[a]," saith St. Paul; but the house of God is the house of prayer: and, therefore, prayer is the work of the soul, whose organs are intended for instruments of the Divine praises; and when every stop and pause of those

[a] 1 Cor. iii. 9.

instruments is but the conclusion of a collect, and every breathing is a prayer, then the body becomes a temple, and the soul is the sanctuary, and more private recess, and place of intercourse. Prayer is the great duty, and the greatest privilege of a Christian; it is his intercourse with God, his sanctuary in troubles, his remedy for sins, his cure of griefs, and, as St. Gregory calls it, "it is the principal instrument whereby we minister to God, in execution of the decrees of eternal predestination;" and those things which God intends for us, we bring to ourselves by the mediation of holy prayers. Prayer is the "ascent of the mind to God, and a petitioning for such things as we need for our support and duty [b]." It is an abstract and summary of Christian religion. Prayer is an act of religion and Divine worship [c], confessing his power and his mercy; it celebrates his attributes, and confesses his glories, and reveres his person, and implores his aid, and gives thanks for his blessings: it is an act of humility, condescension, and dependence, expressed in the prostration of our bodies, and humiliation of our spirits: it is an act of charity, when we pray for others; it is an act of repentance, when it confesses and begs pardon for our sins, and exercises every grace according to the design of the man, and the matter of the prayer. So that there will be less need to amass arguments to invite us to this duty; every part is an excellence, and every end of it is a blessing, and every design is a motive, and every need is an impulsive to this holy office. Let us but remember how many needs we have, at how cheap a rate we may obtain their remedies, and yet how honourable the employment is, to go to God with confidence, and to fetch our supplies with easiness and joy; and then, without farther preface, we may address ourselves to the understanding of that duty by which we imitate the employment of angels and beatified spirits, by which we ascend to God in spirit while we remain on earth, and God descends on earth while he yet resides in heaven, sitting there on the throne of his kingdom.

2. Our first inquiry must be concerning the matter of our

[b] Ἀνάβασις νοῦ πρὸς Θεὸν, καὶ αἴτησις τῶν προσηκόντων παρὰ Θεοῦ. — *Damasc.* lib. iii. *Orthodox. Fid.*

[c] Qui fingit sacros auro vel marmore vultus,
Non facit ille deos: qui rogat, ille facit.

prayers; for our desires are not to be the rule of our prayers, unless reason and religion be the rule of our desires. The old heathens prayed to their gods for such things which they were ashamed to name publicly before men[d]; and these were their private prayers, which they durst not, for their indecency or iniquity, make public. And, indeed, sometimes the best men ask of God things not unlawful in themselves, yet very hurtful to them: and, therefore, as by the Spirit of God and right reason we are taught, in general, what is lawful to be asked; so it is still to be submitted to God, when we have asked lawful things, to grant to us in kindness, or to deny us in mercy: after all the rules that can be given us, we not being able, in many instances, to judge for ourselves, unless also we could certainly pronounce concerning future contingencies. But the Holy Ghost being now sent upon the church, and the rule of Christ being left to his church, together with his form of prayer, taught and prescribed to his disciples, we have sufficient instruction for the matter of our prayers, so far as concerns the lawfulness or unlawfulness. And the rule is easy and of no variety. 1. For we are bound to pray for all things that concern our duty, all that we are bound to labour for; such as are glory and grace, necessary assistances of the Spirit, and rewards spiritual, heaven, and heavenly things. 2. Concerning those things which we may, with safety, hope for, but are not matter of duty to us, we may lawfully testify our hope and express our desires by petition: but if, in their particulars, they are under no express promise, but only conveniences of our life and person, it is only lawful to pray for them under condition, that they may conform to God's will and our duty, as they are good, and placed in the best order of eternity. Therefore, 1. For spiritual blessings let our prayers be particularly importunate, perpetual, and persevering: 2. For

[d] Cujusmodi ridet Lucianus in Icaro-Menippo: Ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸ βασιλεῦσαι μοι γένοιτο. ὦ Ζεῦ, τὰ κρόμμυά μοι φῦναι καὶ τὰ σκόροδα. ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸν πατέρα μοι ταχέως ἀποθανεῖν. ὁ δέ τις ἂν φαίη, εἶδε κληρονομήσαι με τῆς γυναικός. εἶδε λάθοιμι ἐπιβουλεύσας τῷ ἀδελφῷ· γένοιτό μοι νικῆσαι τὴν δίκην, στεφθῆναι τὰ ὀλύμπια. τῶν πλεόντων ὁ μὲν Βορέαν ηὔχετο ἐπιπνεῦσαι, ὁ δὲ Νότον· ὁ δὲ γεωργὸς ἤρτει ὑετὸν, ὁ δὲ ναφεὺς ἥλιον.

—— Si tacito mala vota susurro
Concipimus ——— Pulchra Laverna,
Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri;
Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nubem. — *Horat.*

temporal blessings let them be generally short[e], conditional, and modest: 3. And whatsoever things are of mixed nature, more spiritual than riches, and less necessary than graces, such as are gifts and exterior aids, we may pray for them as we may desire them, and as we may expect them; that is, with more confidence and less restraint than in the matter of temporal requests, but with more reservedness, and less boldness of petition, than when we pray for the graces of sanctification. In the first case we are bound to pray; in the second, it is only lawful under certain conditions; in the third, it becomes to us as an act of zeal, nobleness, and Christian prudence. But the matter of our prayers is best taught us, in the form our Lord taught his disciples; which, because it is short, mysterious, and, like the treasures of the Spirit, full of wisdom and latent senses, it is not improper to draw forth those excellencies, which are intended and signified by every petition; that, by so excellent an authority, we may know what it is lawful to beg of God[f].

3. "Our Father, which art in heaven." The address reminds us of many parts of our duty. "If God be our Father, where is" his fear, and reverence, and obedience? "If ye were Abraham's children[g], ye would do the works of Abraham;" and, "Ye are of your father, the devil, for his works ye do." Let us not dare to call him Father, if we be rebels and enemies; but if we be obedient, then we know he is our Father, and will give us a child's portion, and the inherit-

[e] ——— Si consilium vis,
Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris;
Nam pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt dii. — *Juvenal. Sat.* x. 346.

Exorari in perniciem rogantium, sæva benignitas est.
——— Multa petentibus
Desunt multa. Bene est, cui Deus obtulit
Parcà, quod satis est, manu. *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 16.

[f] Oratio hæc, quantum substringitur verbis, tantum diffunditur sensibus. — *Tertull. Evangelii Breviarium. Idem l. de Orat.* c. 1.

Si tamen rectè et congruenter oramus, nihil aliud dicere possumus quàm quod in Oratione Dominica continetur. — *S. Aug. ad Frat. in Erem.*

[g] Vir bonus vera Dei progenies. — *Senec. de Provident.*

Καὶ τοῦ μὲν γένος ἐσμέν. — *Menand.*

Hoc donum excedit omne donum, ut Deus hominem vocet filium. — *Leo. Ser. de Nativ.*

Matt. xxiii. 8. Eph. iv. 6.

ance of sons. But it is observable, that Christ, here speaking concerning private prayer, does describe it in a form of plural signification; to tell us, that we are to draw into the communication of our prayers all those who are confederated in the common relation of sons to the same Father. "Which art in heaven[h]," tells us, where our hopes and our hearts must be fixed, whither our desires and our prayers must tend. *Sursum corda;* "Where our treasure is, there must our hearts be also."

4. "Hallowed be thy name." That is, Let thy name, thy essence, and glorious attributes, be honoured and adored in all the world, believed by faith, loved by charity, celebrated with praises, thanked with eucharist; and let thy name be hallowed in us, as it is in itself. Thy name being called upon us, let us walk worthy of that calling; that "our light may shine before men, that they, seeing our good works, may glorify thee, our Father, which art in heaven." In order, also, to the sanctification of thy name, grant that all our praises, hymns, eucharistical remembrances, and representments of thy glories, may be useful, blessed, and effectual, for the dispersing thy fame, and advancing thy honour over all the world. This is a direct and formal act of worshipping and adoration. The name of God is representative of God himself, and it signifies: Be thou worshipped and adored, be thou thanked and celebrated, with honour and eucharist.

5. "Thy kingdom come." That is: As thou hast caused to be preached and published the coming of thy kingdom, the peace and truth, the revelation and glories, of the Gospel; so let it come verily and effectually to us, and all the world; that thou mayest truly reign in our spirits, exercising absolute dominion, subduing all thine enemies, ruling in our faculties, in the understanding by faith, in the will by charity, in the passions by mortification, in the members by a chaste and right use of the parts. And as it was more particularly, and in the letter, proper at the beginning of Christ's preaching, when he also taught the prayer, that God would hasten the coming of the Gospel to all the world: so now also, and ever it will be, in its proportion, necessary and pious, to pray that

[h] Nihil nos delectet in infimis, qui Patrem habemus in cœlis.—*Leo. Ser. de Ascens.*

it may come still; making greater progress in the world, extending itself where yet it is not, and intending it where it is already; that the kingdom of Christ may not only be in us, in name and form, and honourable appellatives, but in effect and power. This petition, in the first ages of Christianity, was not expounded to signify a prayer for Christ's second coming; because, the Gospel not being preached to all the world, they prayed for the delay of the day of judgment, that Christ's kingdom upon earth might have its proper increment: but since then, every age, as it is more forward in time, so it is more earnest in desire, to accomplish the intermedial prophecies, that the kingdom of God the Father might come in glories infinite. And, indeed, the kingdom of grace being in order to the kingdom of glory, this, as it is principally to be desired, so may possibly be intended chiefly: which, also, is the more probable, because the address of this prayer being to God the Father, it is proper to observe, that the kingdom of grace, or of the Gospel, is called the kingdom of the Son[1]; and that of glory, in the style of the Scripture, is the kingdom of the Father. St. German, patriarch of Constantinople, expounds it with some little difference, but not ill: "Thy kingdom come," that is, let thy Holy Spirit come into us; for "the kingdom of heaven is within us," saith the holy Scripture: and so it intimates our desires, that the promise of the Father, and the prophecies of old, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter, may come upon us. Let that "anointing from above" descend upon us, whereby we may be anointed kings and priests, in a spiritual kingdom and priesthood, by a holy chrism.

6. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." That is, the whole economy and dispensation of thy providence, be the guide of the world, and the measure of our desire; that we be patient in all accidents, conformable to God's will, both in doing and in suffering; submitting to changes, and even to persecutions, and doing all God's will: which because without God's aid we cannot do, therefore we beg it of him by prayer; but by his aid we are confident we may do it, in the manner of angelical obedience; that is, promptly, readily, cheerfully, and with all our faculties. Or thus: As the

[1] Colos. i. 13. Revel. i. 9. Matt. xiii. 41. Luke, vi. 20. Matt. xvi. 28.

angels in heaven serve thee with harmony, concord, and peace; so let us all join in the service of thy majesty, with peace and purity, and love unfeigned; that as all the angels are in peace, and amongst them there is no persecutor, and none persecuted, there is none afflicting or afflicted, none assaulting or assaulted, but all, in sweetness and peaceable serenity, glorifying thee; so let thy will be done on earth, by all the world, in peace and unity, in charity and tranquillity; that with one heart, and one voice, we may glorify thee, our universal Father; having in us nothing that may displease thee, having quitted all our own desires and pretensions, living in angelic conformity, our souls subject to thee, and our passions to our souls; that "in earth," also, "thy will" may "be done," as in the spirit and soul, which is a portion of the heavenly substance. These three petitions are addressed to God, by way of adoration. In the first, the soul puts on the affections of a child, and divests itself of its own interest, offering itself up wholly to the designs and glorifications of God. In the second, it puts on the relation and duty of a subject to her legitimate prince, seeking the promotion of his regal interest. In the third, she puts on the affection of a spouse, loving the same love, and choosing the same object, and delighting in unions and conformities. The next part descends lower, and makes addresses to God, in relation to our own necessities.

7. "Give us this day our daily bread[k]." That is, give unto us all that is necessary for the support of our lives, the bread of our necessity; so the Syriac interpreter reads it:

[k] Ἐπιούσιος, ab ἐπιοῦσα, quod *diem posterum* significat. Nazarenorum Evangelium (referente S. Hieronymo) legit *panem crastinum;* S. Lucas *panem diurnum*, sive indies necessarium, τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν. πλοῦτός ἐστι κτῆσις σύμμετρος πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν.

Vivitur parvo bene, cui paternum
Splendet in mensa tenui salinum,
Nec leves somnos timor aut cupido
Sordidus aufert. *Horat.* lib. ii. *Od.* 16.

Fructibus Agrippæ Siculis, quos colligis, Icci,
Si rectè frueris, non est ut copia major
Ab Jove donari possit tibi; tolle querelas:
Pauper enim non est cui rerum suppetit usus.
Si ventri bene, si lateri est pedibusque tuis, nil
Divitiæ poterunt regales addere majus.
Horat. ad Iccium, lib. ii. *Ep.* 12.

Μὴ μόνον τοῦ ζῆν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ ἀποθνήσκειν, τὴν τροφὴν ἶναι ἐφόδιον. — *Plutarch.*

" This day give us the portion of bread, which is day by day necessary." Give us the bread or support which we shall need all our lives; only this day minister our present part. For we pray for the necessary bread or maintenance, which God knows we shall need all our days; but, that we " be not careful for to-morrow," we are taught to pray, not that it be all at once represented or deposited, but that God would minister it as we need it, how he pleases: but our needs are to be the measure of our desires, our desires must not make our needs; that we may be confident of the Divine providence, and not at all covetous: for therefore God feeds his people with extemporary provisions, that by needing always, they may learn to pray to him; and, by being still supplied, may learn to trust him for the future, and thank him for that is past, and rejoice in the present. So God rained down manna, giving them their daily portion; and so all fathers and masters minister to their children and servants, giving them their proportion as they eat it, not the meat of a year at once; and yet no child or servant fears want, if his parent or lord were good, and wise, and rich. And it is necessary for all to pray this prayer: the poor, because they want the bread, and have it not deposited but in the hands of God: " mercy ploughing the fields of heaven," (as Job's expression is,) brings them corn; and " the cattle upon a thousand hills are God's," and they find the poor man meat. The rich also need this prayer; because, although they have the bread, yet they need the blessing; and what they have now may perish, or be taken from them; and as preservation is a perpetual creation, so the continuing to rich men what God hath already bestowed, is a continual giving it. Young men must pray, because their needs are like to be the longer; and old men, because they are present. But all these are to pray but for the present[1]; that which, in estimation of law, is to be

[1] Lætus in præsens animus quod ultrà est
Oderit curare; et amara læto
Temperet risu. *Horat.* lib. ii. *Od.* 16.
——— quid æternis minorem
Consiliis animum fatigas? *Horat.* lib. ii. *Od.* 11.
Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam:
Jam te premet nox, fabulæque manes,
Et domus exilis Plutonia. *Horat.* lib. i. *Od.* 4.
Ἀναγκαιότατον ἰφόδιον. — *Conc. Nicen.*

reckoned as imminent upon the present, and part of this state and condition. But it is great improvidence, and an unchristian spirit, for old men to heap up provisions, and load their sumpters still the more, by how much their way is shorter. But there is also a bread which came down from heaven, a diviner nutriment of our souls, the food and wine of angels, Christ himself, as he communicates himself in the expresses of his word and sacraments; and if we be destitute of this bread, we are miserable and perishing people. We must pray, that our souls also may feed upon those celestial viands, prepared for us in the antepasts of the Gospel, till the great and fuller meal of the supper of the Lamb shall answer all our prayers, and satisfy every desire.

8. "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." Not only those sins of infirmity, invasion, and sudden surprise, which, like excrescencies of luxuriant trees, adhere to many actions by inadvertency, and either natural weakness or accidental prejudice; but also all those great sins, which were washed off from our souls, and the stain taken away in baptism; or when by choice, and after the use of reason, we gave up our names to Christ, when we first received the adoption of sons: for even those things were so pardoned, that we must for ever confess and glory in the Divine mercy, and still ascertain it, by performing what we then promised, and which were the conditions of our covenant. For although Christ hath taken off the guilt, yet still there remains the disreputation; and St. Paul calls himself "the chiefest of sinners," not referring to his present condition, but to his former persecuting the church of God, which is one of the greatest crimes in the world; and for ever he asked pardon for it: and so must we, knowing that they may return; if we shake off the yoke of Christ, and break his cords from us, the bands of the covenant evangelical, the sins will return so as to undo us. And this we pray, with a tacit obligation to forgive: for so only, and upon that condition, we beg pardon to be given or continued respectively; that is, as we from our hearts forgive them that did us injury in any kind, never entertaining so much as a thought of revenge, but, contrariwise, loving them that did us wrong;

for so we beg that God should do to us: and, therefore, it is but a lesser revenge to say, I will forgive, but I will never have to do with him. For if he become an object of charity, we must have to do with him, to relieve him; because he needs prayers, we must have to do with him, and pray for him: and to refuse his society, when it is reasonably and innocently offered, is to deny that to him, which Christians have only been taught to deny to persons excommunicate, to persons under punishment, i. e. to persons not yet forgiven: and we shall have but an evil portion, if God should forgive our sins, and should not also love us[m], and do us grace, and bestow benefits upon us. So we must forgive others; so God forgives us.

9. "And lead us not into temptation." St. Cyprian, out of an old Latin copy, reads it, "Suffer us not to be led into temptation[n];" that is, suffer us not to be overcome by temptation. And, therefore, we are bound to prevent our access to such temptation, whose very approximation is dangerous, and the contact is irregular and evil; such as are temptations of the flesh: yet, in other temptations, the assault sometimes makes confident, and hardens a resolution. For some spirits, who are softened by fair usages, are steeled and emboldened by a persecution. But of what nature soever the temptations be, whether they be such whose approach a Christian is bound to fear, or such which are the certain lot of Christians, (such are troubles and persecutions, into which, "when we enter," we must "count it joy,") yet we are to pray, that we enter not into the possession of the temptation, that we be not overcome by it.

10. "But deliver us from evil." From the assaults or violence of evil, from "the wicked one," who not only presents us with objects, but heightens our concupiscence, and makes us imaginative, fantastical, and passionate; setting on the temptation, making the lust active, and the man full of appetite, and the appetite full of energy and power: therefore

[m] Parùm est nobis non puniri, nisi mereamur et diligi. — *Hugo de S. Victor. Allegat. in Matt.* lib. iii.

[n] Τί γὰρ; Θεὸς εἰσάγει ἄνθρωπον εἰς πειρασμόν; μὴ γένοιτο. οὐ γὰρ αἴτιος τῶν κακῶν ὁ Θεός. ἀλλὰ παρακαλέσομεν αὐτὸν, ἵνα τοῖς πολλοῖς αὐτοῦ οἰκτιρμοῖς μὴ ἐάσῃ ἡμᾶς πειρασθῆναι. — *S. German. Patr. C. P.* περὶ τῶν Ἱερῶν.

deliver us from the evil one, who is interested, as an enemy, in every hostility, and in every danger. Let not Satan have any power or advantage over us; and let not evil men prevail upon us in our danger, much less to our ruin. Make us "safe under the covering of thy wings," against all fraud and every violence; that no temptation destroy our hopes, or break our strength, or alter our state, or overthrow our glories. In these last petitions, which concern ourselves, the soul hath affections proper to her own needs; as in the former proportion, to God's glory. In the first of these, the affection of a poor, indigent, and necessitous beggar; in the second, of a delinquent and penitent servant; in the last, of a person in affliction or danger. And, after all this, the reason of our confidence is derived from God.

11. "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever." That is, these which we beg, are for the honour of thy kingdom, for the manifestation of thy power, and the glory of thy name and mercies: and it is an express doxology or adoration, which is apt and fit to conclude all our prayers and addresses to God.

12. These are the generals and great treasures of matter, to which all our present or sudden needs are reducible; and when we make our prayers more minute and particular, if the instance be in matter of duty, and merely spiritual, there is no danger: but when our needs are temporal, or we are transported with secular desires, all descending to particulars is a confining the Divine Providence, a judging for ourselves, a begging a temptation oftentimes, sometimes a mischief°: and to beg beyond the necessities of our life, is a mutiny against that Providence, which assigns to Christians no more but "food and raiment" for their own use; all other excrescencies of possessions being intrusted to the rich man's dispensation, only as to a steward; and he shall be accountable for the coat that lies by him, as the portion of moths, and for the shoes which are the spoils of mouldiness, and the contumely of plenty. "Grant me, O Lord, not what I

° ——— Pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt dii.
Charior est illis homo quàm sibi. Nos, animorum
Impulsu et cæcâ magnâque cupidine ducti,
Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris: at illis
Notum qui pueri, qualisque futura sit uxor. — *Juven. Sat.* x. 349.

desire, but what is profitable for me[p]." For sometimes we desire that, which, in the succeeding event of things, will undo us. This rule is in all things that concern ourselves. There is some little difference in the affairs and necessities of other men: for, provided we submit to the Divine Providence, and pray for good things for others, only with a tacit condition, so far as they are good and profitable, in order to the best ends; yet, if we be particular, there is no covetousness in it; there may be indiscretion in the particular; but in the general no fault, because it is a prayer, and a design of charity. "For kings, and all that are in authority," we may yet enlarge, and pray for a peaceable reign, true lieges, strong armies, victories and fair success in their just wars, health, long life, and riches; because they have a capacity which private persons have not[q]: and whatsoever is good for single persons, and whatsoever is apt for their uses as public persons, all that we may and we must pray for, either particularly, for so we may; or in general significations, for so we must at least: "that we may lead a godly, peaceable, and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty;" that is St. Paul's rule, and the prescribed measure and purpose of such prayers. And in this instance of kings, we may pray for defeating all the king's enemies, such as are truly such; and we have no other restraint upon us in this, but that we keep our desires confined within the limits of the end we are commanded; that is, so far to confound the king's enemies, that he may do his duty, and we do ours, and receive the blessing: ever, as much as we can, to distinguish the malice from the person. But if the enemies themselves will not also separate what our intentions distinguish, that is, if they will not return to their duty; then, let the prayers operate as God pleases, we must be zealous for the end of the king's authority and peaceable government. By enemies, I mean rebels or invaders, tyrants and usurpers; for in other wars there are many other considerations, not proper for this place.

13. The next consideration will be concerning the manner; I mean both the manner of our persons, and the manner of our prayers; that is, with what conditions we ought to

[p] Μή μοι γένοιθ' ἃ βούλομ', ἀλλ' ἃ συμφέρει.

[q] ——— Rege incolumi, mens omnibus una;
Amisso, rupêre fidem. *Virg. Georg.* iv. 212.

approach to God, and with what circumstances the prayers may, or ought to be performed. The conditions to make our prayers holy and certain to prevail, are: 1. That we live good lives, endeavouring to conform, by holy obedience, to all the Divine commandments. This condition is expressly recorded by St. John: "Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God, and whatsoever we ask of him we shall obtain[r]:" and St. James affirms, that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much[s]:" and our blessed Saviour, limiting the confidence of our prayers for forgiveness to our charity and forgiving others, plainly tells us, that the uncharitable and unrighteous person shall not be heard. And the blind man in the Gospel understood well what he said, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper, and doeth his will, him he heareth[t]." And it was so decreed and resolved a point in the doctrine of their religion, that it was a proverbial saying. And although this discourse of the blind man was of a restrained occasion, and signified, if Christ had been a false prophet, God would not have attested his sermons with the power of miracles; yet in general also he had been taught by David, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer[u]." And, therefore, when men "pray in every place," (for so they are commanded,) "let them lift up pure hands, without anger and contention[x]." And indeed, although every sin entertained with a free choice and a full understanding is an obstruction to our prayers; yet the special sin of uncharitableness makes the biggest cloud[y], and is, in the proper matter of it, an indisposition for us to receive mercy: for he who is softened with apprehension of his own needs of mercy, will be tenderhearted towards his brother; and, therefore, he that hath no bowels here, can have no aptness there to receive, or heartily to hope for mercy. But this rule is to be understood of persons who persevere in the habit and remanent affections of sin; so long as they entertain sin with love, complacency, and joy, they are in a state of enmity with God, and therefore in no fit disposition to receive pardon and the entertainment

[r] 1 John, iii. 21. [s] James, v. 16. [t] John, ix. 31.
[u] Psal. lxvi. 18. [x] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[y] Posuisti ut nubem peccatum, ne transeat oratio.—*Lam.* 5,

of friends: but penitent sinners and returning souls, laden and grieved with their heavy pressures, are, next to holy innocents, the aptest persons in the world to be heard in their prayers for pardon; but they are in no farther disposition to large favours, and more eminent charities. A sinner, in the beginning of his penance, will be heard for himself, and yet also he needs the prayers of holy persons more signally than others; for he hath but some very few degrees of dispositions to reconciliation: but in prayers of intercession or mediation for others, only holy and very pious persons are fit to be interested. All men, as matter of duty, must pray for all men[z]: but in the great necessities of a prince, of a church, or kingdom, or of a family, or of a great danger and calamity to a single person, only a Noah, a David, a Daniel, a Jeremiah, an Enoch, or Job, are fit and proportioned advocates. God so requires holiness in us, that our prayers may be accepted, that he entertains them in several degrees, according to the degrees of our sanctity; to fewer or more purposes, according as we are little or great in the kingdom of heaven. As for those irregular donations of good things which wicked persons ask for and have, they are either no mercies, but instruments of cursing and crime, or else they are designs of grace, intended to convince them of their unworthiness; and so, if they become not instruments of their conversion, they are aggravations of their ruin.

14. Secondly: The second condition I have already explained in the description of the matter of our prayers[a]. For although we may lawfully ask for whatsoever we need, and this leave is consigned to us in those words of our blessed Saviour, "Your heavenly Father knoweth what you have need of:" yet, because God's providence walks in the great deep, that is, his footsteps are in the water, and leave no impression; no former act of grace becomes a precedent that he will give us that in kind which then he saw convenient, and therefore gave us, and now he sees to be inconvenient,

[z] Cùm nam is qui displicet ad intercedendum mittitur, irati animus ad deteriora provocatur. — *Gregor. Pastor.*

Immunis aram si tetigit manus,
Non sumptuosa blandior hostia
Mollivit aversos penates
Farre pio et saliente micâ. — *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 23.

[a] Εὐχῆς δικαίας οὐκ ἀνήκοος θεός.

and therefore does deny. Therefore, in all things, but what are matter of necessary and unmingled duty, we must send up our prayers; but humility, mortification, and conformity to the Divine will, must attend for an answer, and bring back, not what the public embassy pretends, but what they have in private instructions to desire; accounting that for the best satisfaction which God pleases, not what I have either unnecessarily, or vainly, or sinfully desired.

15. Thirdly: When our persons are disposed by sanctity, and the matter of our prayers is hallowed by prudence and religious intendments, then we are bound to entertain a full persuasion and confident hope that God will hear us. "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall obtain them[b]," said our blessed Saviour: and St. James taught from that oracle, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God: but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed to and fro[c]:" meaning, that when there is no fault in the matter of our prayers, but that we ask things pleasing to God, and there is no indisposition and hostility in our persons and manners between God and us, then to doubt were to distrust God; for all being right on our parts, if we doubt the issue, the defailance must be on that part, which to suspect were infinite impiety. But after we have done all we can, if, out of humility, and fear that we are not truly disposed, we doubt of the issue, it is a modesty which will not at all discommend our persons, nor impede the event; provided we at no hand suspect either God's power or veracity. Putting trust in God[d] is an excellent advantage to our prayers; "I will deliver him," saith God, "because he hath put his trust in me." And yet distrusting ourselves, and suspecting our own dispositions, as it pulls us back in our actual confidence of the event, so, because it abates nothing of our confidence in God, it pre-

[b] Mark, xi. 24. [c] James, i. 5, 6.

[d] Chrysantio Deus in aurem hunc versiculum occinuit, Ὅς κε θεοῖς ἐπιπείθηται, μάλα τ' ἔκλυον αὐτοῦ.—*Eunapius in Vita Maximi.*

Signum futuræ impetrationis est, quando Spiritus Sanctus movet ad petendum cum fiducia, et quasi securitate impetrandi.—*Cassian. Collat.* ix. c. 32.

Ecclus. xxxv. 17. Psal. cii. 17.

pares us to receive the reward of humility, and not to lose the praise of a holy trusting in the Almighty.

16. These conditions are essential: some other there are which are incidents and accessories, but at no hand to be neglected. And the first is, actual or habitual attention to our prayers, which we are to procure with moral and severe endeavours, that we desire not God to hear us when we do not hear ourselves. To which purpose we must avoid, as much as our duty will permit us, multiplicity of cares and exterior employments; for a river cut into many rivulets divides also its strength, and grows contemptible, and apt to be forded by a lamb, and drunk up by a summer sun: so is the spirit of man busied in variety, and divided in itself[e]; it abates its fervour, cools into indifferency, and becomes trifling by its dispersion and inadvertency. Aquinas was once asked, with what compendium a man might best become learned? he answered, By reading of one book: meaning, that an understanding entertained with several objects is intent upon neither, and profits not. And so it is when we pray to God; if the cares of the world intervene, they choke our desire into an indifferency, and suppress the flame into a smoke, and strangle the spirit. But this, being an habitual carelessness and intemperance of spirit, is an enemy to an habitual attention, and therefore is highly criminal, and makes our prayers to be but the labour of the lips; because our desires are lessened by the remanent affections of the world. But besides an habitual attention in our prayers, that is, a desire in general of all that our prayers pretend to in particular, there is also for the accommodation, and to facilitate the

[e] Non in pluribus sint actus tui.—*Ecclus.* xi. 10.

Impar quisque invenitur ad singula, dum confusâ mente dividitur ad multa.—*S. Greg. Past.* p. i. c. 4.

Magnam rem puta, hominem unum agere: præter sapientem nemo unum agit; cæteri multiformes sumus.—*Seneca.*

Mentem tantæ rei intentam vacare omnibus aliis etiam culpâ carentibus vitiis oportet.—*Quintil.*

Inveni Dilectum meum in lectulo, *i. e.* in quiete; quia quæ cura implicat, quies explicat.—*S. Bernard. Serm.* 1. *in Cant.*

Quis locus ingenio, nisi cùm se carmine solo
Vexant———
Pectora nostra duas non admittentia curas?
Magnæ mentis opus, nec de lodice paranda
Attonitæ——— *Juvenal. Sat.* 7.

access of our prayers, required, that we attend actually to the words or sense of every collect or petition. To this we must contend with prayer, with actual dereliction and seposition of all our other affairs, though innocent and good in other kinds, by a present spirit. And the use of it is, that such attention is an actual conversing with God; it occasions the exercise of many acts of virtue, it increases zeal and fervency, and, by reflection, enkindles love and holy desires. And although there is no rule to determine the degree of our actual attention, and it is ordinarily impossible never to wander with a thought, or to be interrupted with a sudden immission into our spirit in the midst of prayers; yet our duty is, by mortification of our secular desires, by suppression of all our irregular passions, by reducing them to indifferency, by severity of spirit, by enkindling our holy appetites and desires of holy things, by silence, and meditation, and repose, to get as forward in this excellency as we can: to which also we may be very much helped by ejaculatory prayers and short breathings; in which, as, by reason of their short abode upon the spirit, there is less fear of diversion, so also they may so often be renewed, that nothing of the devotion may be unspent, or expire for want of oil to feed and entertain the flame. But the determination of the case of conscience is this: Habitual attention is absolutely necessary in our prayers; that is, it is altogether our duty to desire of God all that we pray for, though our mind be not actually attending to the form of words; and, therefore, all worldly desires, that are inordinate, must be rescinded, that we more earnestly attend on God than on the world. He that prays to God to give him the gift of chastity, and yet secretly wishes rather for an opportunity of lust, and desires God would not hear him, (as St. Austin confesses of himself in his youth,) that man sins for want of holy and habitual desires; he prays only with his lips, what he in no sense attests in his heart. 2. Actual attention to our prayers is also necessary, not ever to avoid a sin, but that the present prayer become effectual. He that means to feast, and to get thanks of God, must invite the poor; and yet he that invites the rich, in that he sins not, though he hath no reward of God for that. So that prayer perishes to which the man gives no degree of actual attention, for the prayer is as if it

were not; it is no more than a dream, or an act of custom and order, nothing of devotion; and so accidentally becomes a sin, (I mean there, where, and in what degrees it is avoidable,) by taking God's name in vain. 3. It is not necessary to the prevalency of the prayer, that the spirit actually accompany every clause or word; if it says a hearty Amen, or in any part of it attests the whole, it is such an attention which the present condition of most men will sometimes permit. 4. A wandering of the spirit, through carelessness, or any vice, or inordinate passion, is in that degree criminal as is the cause, and it is heightened by the greatness of the interruption. 5. It is only excused by our endeavours to cure it, and by our after-acts, either of sorrow, or repetition of the prayer, and reinforcing the intention. And certainly, if we repeat our prayer, in which we have observed our spirits too much to wander, and resolve still to repeat it, (as our opportunities permit,) it may in a good degree defeat the purpose of the enemy, when his own arts shall return upon his head, and the wandering of our spirits be made the occasion of a prayer, and the parent of a new devotion. 6. Lastly, according to the degrees of our actual attention, so our prayers are more or less perfect: a present spirit being a great instrument and testimony of wisdom, and apt to many great purposes; and our continual abode with God being a great endearment of our persons, by increasing the affections.

17. Secondly: The second accessory is "intention of spirit," or fervency; such as was that of our blessed Saviour, who prayed to his Father with strong cries and loud petitions, not clamorous in language, but strong in spirit. St. Paul also, when he was pressed with a strong temptation, prayed thrice, that is, earnestly; and St. James affirms this to be of great value and efficacy to the obtaining blessings[f], "The effectual fervent prayer of a just person avails much;" and Elias, though "a man of like passions," yet by earnest prayer he obtained rain, or drought, according as he desired. Now this is properly produced by the greatness of our desire of heavenly things, our true value and estimate of religion, our sense of present pressures, our fears; and it hath some

[f] ——Τὸ δὲ ζητούμενον ἁλωτὸν ἐκφεύγει τ' ἀμελούμενον.—*Sophocl. Œdip.*

accidental increases by the disposition of our body, the strength of fancy, and the tenderness of spirit, and assiduity of the dropping of religious discourses; and in all men is necessary to be so great, as that we prefer heaven and religion before the world, and desire them rather, with the choice of our wills and understanding: though there cannot always be that degree of sensual, pungent, or delectable affections towards religion, as towards the desires of nature and sense; yet ever we must prefer celestial objects, restraining the appetites of the world, lest they be immoderate, and heightening the desires of grace and glory, lest they become indifferent, and the fire upon the altar of incense be extinct. But the greater zeal and fervour of desire we have in our prayers, the sooner and the greater will the return of the prayer be, if the prayer be for spiritual objects. For other things our desires must be according to our needs, not by a value derived from the nature of the thing, but the usefulness it is of to us, in order to our greater and better purposes.

18. Thirdly: Of the same consideration it is, that we "persevere and be importunate[g]" in our prayers, by repetition of our desires, and not remitting either our affections or our offices, till God, overcome by our importunity, give a gracious answer. Jacob wrestled with the angel all night, and would not dismiss him till he had given him a blessing; "Let me alone," saith God, as if he felt a pressure and burden lying upon him by our prayers, or could not quit himself, nor depart, unless we give him leave. And since God is detained by our prayers, and we may keep him as long as we please, and that he will not go away till we leave speaking to him; he that will dismiss him till he hath his blessing, knows not the value of his benediction, or understands not the energy and power of a persevering prayer. And to this purpose Christ "spake a parable, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint[h]." "Praying without ceasing," St. Paul calls it; that is, with continual addresses, frequent interpellations, never ceasing renewing the request

[g] Τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτεροῦντες, Rom. xii. 12. Quod olim erat Levitarum et sacerdotum proprium.

[h] Luke, xviii. 1.

Χρὴ ἀδιαλείπτως ἐυχεσθαι τῆς περὶ τὸ θεῖον θρησκείας.—*Proclus ad Timæum.*

till I obtain my desire. For it is not enough to recommend our desires to God with one hearty prayer, and then forget to ask him any more; but so long as our needs continue, so long, in all times, and upon all occasions, to renew and repeat our desires: and this is "praying continually." Just as the widow did to the unjust judge; she never left going to him, she troubled him every day with her clamorous suit; so must we "pray always," that is, every day, and many times every day, according to our occasions and necessities, or our devotion and zeal, or as we are determined by the customs and laws of a church; never giving over through weariness or distrust, often renewing our desires by a continual succession of devotions, returning at certain and determinate periods. For God's blessings, though they come infallibly, yet not always speedily; saving only that it is a blessing to be delayed, that we may increase our desire, and renew our prayers, and do acts of confidence and patience, and ascertain and increase the blessing when it comes. For we do not more desire to be blessed than God does to hear us importunate for blessing; and he weighs every sigh, and bottles up every tear, and records every prayer, and looks through the cloud, with delight to see us upon our knees, and, when he sees his time, his light breaks through it, and shines upon us. Only we must not make our accounts for God according to the course of the sun, but the measures of eternity. He measures us by our needs, and we must not measure him by our impatience. "God is not slack, as some men count slackness," saith the apostle; and we find it so, when we have waited long. All the elapsed time is no part of the tediousness; the trouble of it is past with itself: and for the future, we know not how little it may be; for aught we know, we are already entered into the cloud that brings the blessing. However, pray till it comes: for we shall never miss to receive our desire, if it be holy, or innocent, and safe; or else we are sure of a great reward of our prayers.

19. And in this, so determined, there is no danger of blasphemy, or vain repetitions: for those repetitions are vain which repeat the words, not the devotion, which renew the expression, and not the desire; and he that may pray the same prayer to-morrow which he said to-day, may pray the

same at night which he said in the morning, and the same at noon which he said at night, and so in all the hours of prayer, and in all the opportunities of devotion. Christ, in his agony, "went thrice, and said the same words," but he had intervals for repetition; and his need and his devotion pressed him forward: and whenever our needs do so, it is all one if we say the same words or others, so we express our desire, and tell our needs, and beg the remedy. In the same office, and the same hour of prayer, to repeat the same things often hath but few excuses to make it reasonable, and fewer to make it pious: but to think that the prayer is better for such repetition, is the fault which the holy Jesus condemned in the Gentiles, who in their hymns would say a name over a hundred times. But in this we have no rule to determine us in numbers and proportion, but right reason[1]. God loves not any words the more for being said often; and those repetitions which are unreasonable in prudent estimation, cannot in any account be esteemed pious. But where a reasonable cause allows the repetition, the same cause that makes it reasonable makes it also proper for devotion. He that speaks his needs, and expresses nothing but his fervour and greatness of desire, cannot be vain or long in his prayers; he that speaks impertinently, that is, unreasonably and without desires, is long, though he speak but two syllables; he that thinks for speaking much to be heard the sooner, thinks God is delighted in the labour of the lips: but when reason is the guide, and piety is the rule, and necessity is the measure, and desire gives the proportion, let the prayer be very long; he that shall blame it for its length, must proclaim his disrelish both of reason and religion, his despite of necessity, and contempt of zeal.

20. As a part and instance of our importunity in prayer, it is usually reckoned and advised, that in cases of great, sudden, and violent need, we corroborate our prayers with a

[1] Obe jam desine deos, uxor, gratulando obtundere
Tuam esse inventam gnatam: nisi illos tuo ex ingenio judicas,
Ut nil credas intelligere nisi idem dictum est centies.—*Ter. Heaut.*

Λαλεῖν ἄριστος, ἀδυνατώτατος λέγειν.
Τεκμήριον δὲ τοῦδε τὸν Ὁμηρον λάβε·
Οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν μυρίαδας ἐπῶν γράφει,
Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ εἷς Ὁμηρον εἶρηκεν μακρόν.—*Philem.*
Χωρεῖς τὸ, τ' εἰπεῖν πολλὰ, καὶ τὰ καίρια.—*Sophocl. Œdip.* 2.

vow of doing something holy and religious in an uncommanded instance, something to which God had not formerly bound our duty, though fairly invited our will[k]; or else, if we choose a duty in which we were obliged, then to vow the doing of it in a more excellent manner, with a greater inclination of the will, with a more fervent repetition of the act, with some more noble circumstance, with a fuller assent of the understanding, or else adding a new promise to our old duty, to make it become more necessary to us, and to secure our duty. In this case, as it requires great prudence and caution in the susception, lest what we piously intend obtain a present blessing, and lay a lasting snare; so, if it be prudent in the manner, holy in the matter, useful in the consequence, and safe in all the circumstances of the person, it is an endearing us and our prayer to God by the increase of duty and charity, and therefore a more probable way of making our prayers gracious and acceptable. And the religion of vows was not only hallowed by the example of Jacob at Bethel, of Hannah praying for a child, and God hearing her, of David vowing a temple to God, and made regular and safe by the rules and cautions in Moses' law; but left by our blessed Saviour in the same constitution he found it, he having innovated nothing in the matter of vows: and it was practised accordingly in the instance of St. Paul at Cenchrea; of Ananias and Sapphira[l], who vowed their possessions to

[k] In re trepida Tullus Hostilius duodecim vovit salios fanaque Pallori et Pavori.—*Livius.*

Ego me majore religione quàm quisque fuit ullius voti obstrictum puto. —*Cicer. ad Atticum.*

Solebant autem et vota fieri gratitudinis indicia.

Voveram dulces epulas et album
Libero caprum propè funeratus
Arboris ictu.—*Horat.* lib. iii. *Od.* 8.
Non est meum——ad miseras preces
Decurrere, et votis pacisci,
Ne Cypriæ Tyriæque merces
Addant avaro divitias mari.—*Id.* lib. iii. *Od.* 29.

Et læta quidem in præsens omnia: sed benignitati deorum gratiam referendam, ne ritus sacrorum inter ambigua culti per prospera obliterarentur.—*Tacit. Ann.* lib. xi.

[l] Ananias et Sapphira ideo condemnati, quia post votum abstulerunt quasi sua.—*S. Hieron. Ep.* 8. *ad Demet.*

Quid enim est, fidem primam irritam fecerunt? voverunt, et non reddiderunt.—*S. August.*

the use of the church; and of the widows in the apostolical age, who therefore vowed to remain in the state of widowhood, because concerning them who married after the entry into religion, St. Paul says, "They have broken their first faith:" and such were they of whom our blessed Saviour affirms, "that some make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," that is, such who promise to God a life of chastity. And concerning the success of prayer, so seconded with a prudent and religious vow, besides the instances of Scripture[m], we have the perpetual experience and witness of all Christendom; and, in particular, our Saxon kings have been remarked for this part of importunity in their own chronicles. Oswy[n] got a great victory with unlikely forces against Penda the Dane, after his earnest prayer, and an appendant vow: and Ceadwalla obtained of God power to recover the Isle of Wight from the hands of infidels, after he had prayed, and promised to return the fourth part of it to be employed in the proper services of God and of religion. This can have no objection or suspicion in it among wise and disabused persons; for it can be nothing but an increasing and a renewed act of duty, or devotion, or zeal, or charity, and the importunity of prayer, acted in a more vital and real expression.

21. First: All else that is to be considered concerning prayer, is extrinsical and accidental to it. Prayer is public, or private; in the communion or society of saints, or in our closets: these prayers have less temptation to vanity; the other have more advantages of charity, example, fervour, and energy. In public offices we avoid singularity, in the private we avoid hypocrisy: those are of more edification, these of greater retiredness and silence of spirit: those serve the needs of all the world in the first intention, and our own

In vita nam æterna est quædam egregia gloria, non omnibus in æternum victuris, sed quibusdam ibi tribuenda; cui consequendæ parùm est liberatum esse à peccatis, nisi aliquid liberatori voveatur, quod non sit criminis non vovisse, sed vovisse ac reddidisse sit laudis.—*Idem, de S. Virgin.* c. 14.

[m] Eccles. v. 4, 5. Psal. cxxxii. 1, 2. Deut. xxiii. 21. Acts, xviii. 18.

[n] Oswy vovit filiam in servitutem religionis et vitam cœlibem, simulque duodecim possessiones ad construendas ædes sacras.

——— Reddere victimas
Ædemque votivam memento;
Nos humilem feriemus agnum.—*Hor.* lib. ii. *Od.* 17.

by consequence; these serve our own needs first, and the public only by a secondary intention: these have more pleasure, they more duty: these are the best instruments of repentance, where our confessions may be more particular, and our shame less scandalous; the other are better for eucharist and instruction, for edification of the church, and glorification of God.

22. Secondly: The posture of our bodies in prayer had as great variety as the ceremonies and civilities of several nations came to. The Jews most commonly prayed standing: so did the Pharisee and the publican in the temple[o]. So did the primitive Christians, in all their greater festivals and intervals of jubilee; in their penances they kneeled. The monks in Cassian sate when they sang the psalter[p]. And in every country, whatsoever, by the custom of the nation, was a symbol of reverence and humility, of silence and attention, of gravity and modesty, that posture they translated to their prayers. But, in all nations, bowing the head, that is, a laying down our glory at the feet of God, was the manner of worshippers: and this was always the more humble and the lower, as their devotion was higher; and was very often expressed by prostration, or lying flat upon the ground; and this all nations did, and all religions. Our deportment ought to be grave, decent, humble, apt for adoration, apt to edify; and when we address ourselves to prayer, not instantly to leap into the office, as the judges of the Areopage into their sentence, "without preface or preparatory affections;" but, considering in what presence we speak, and to what purposes, let us balance our fervour with reverential fear: and, when we have done, not rise from the ground as if we vaulted, or were glad we had done; but, as we begin with

[o] Nehem. ix. 5. Mark, xi. 25. Luke, xviii. 11.

[p] Adoraturi sedeant, dixit Numa Pompilius, apud Plutarch. id est, sint sedato animo. Et καθῆσθαι πρεσκυνήσοντας dictum proverbialiter ad eundem sensum. Vide S. Aug. lib. iii. c. 5. de Cura pro Mortuis.

Depositisque suis ornamentis pretiosis,
Simplicis et tenuis fruitur velamine vestis,
Inter sacratos noctis venerabilis hymnos
Intrans nudatis templi sacra limina plantis;
Et prono sacram vultu prostratus ad aram,
Corpus frigoreæ sociavit nobile terræ.

S. Roswcid de Hen. Imper. et de Othon.

desires of assistance, so end with desires of pardon and acceptance, concluding our longer offices with a shorter mental prayer, of more private reflection and reverence, designing to mend what we have done amiss, or to give thanks and proceed if we did well, and according to our powers.

23. Thirdly: In private prayers it is permitted to every man to speak his prayers, or only to think them, which is a speaking to God. Vocal or mental prayer is all one to God, but in order to us they have their several advantages. The sacrifice of the heart, and the calves of the lips, make up a holocaust to God: but words are the arrest of the desires, and keep the spirit fixed, and, in less permissions, to wander from fancy to fancy; and mental prayer is apt to make the greater fervour, if it wander not: our office is more determined by words; but we then actually think of God, when our spirits only speak. Mental prayer, when our spirits wander, is like a watch standing still, because the spring is down; wind it up again, and it goes on regularly: but in vocal prayer, if the words run on, and the spirit wanders, the clock strikes false, the hand points not to the right hour, because something is in disorder, and the striking is nothing but noise. In mental prayer, we confess God's omniscience; in vocal prayer, we call the angels to witness. In the first, our spirits rejoice in God; in the second, the angels rejoice in us. Mental prayer is the best remedy against lightness, and indifferency of affections; but vocal prayer is the aptest instrument of communion. That is more angelical, but yet fittest for the state of separation and glory; this is but human, but it is apter for our present constitution. They have their distinct proprieties, and may be used according to several accidents, occasions, or dispositions.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal God, who hast commanded us to pray unto thee in all our necessities, and to give thanks unto thee for all our instances of joy and blessing, and to adore thee in all thy attributes and communications, thy own glories and thy eternal mercies; give unto me, thy servant, the spirit of prayer and supplication, that I may understand what is good for me, that I may desire regularly, and

choose the best things, that I may conform to thy will, and submit to thy disposing, relinquishing my own affections and imperfect choice. Sanctify my heart and spirit, that I may sanctify thy name, and that I may be gracious and accepted in thine eyes. Give me the humility and obedience of a servant, that I may also have the hope and confidence of a son, making humble and confident addresses to the throne of grace; that, in all my necessities, I may come to thee for aids, and may trust in thee for a gracious answer, and may receive satisfaction and supply.

II.

Give me a sober, diligent, and recollected spirit in my prayers, neither choked with cares, nor scattered by levity, nor discomposed by passion, nor estranged from thee by inadvertency, but fixed fast to thee by the indissoluble bands of a great love and a pregnant devotion: and let the beams of thy Holy Spirit, descending from above, enlighten and enkindle it with great fervours, and holy importunity, and unwearied industry; that I may serve thee, and obtain thy blessing by the assiduity and zeal of perpetual religious offices. Let my prayers come before thy presence, and the lifting up of my hands be a daily sacrifice, and let the fires of zeal not go out by night or day; but unite my prayers to the intercession of thy holy Jesus, and to a communion of those offices, which angels and beatified souls do pay before the throne of the Lamb, and at the celestial altar; that, my prayers being hallowed by the merits of Christ, and being presented in the phial of the saints, may ascend thither where thy glory dwells, and from whence mercy and eternal benediction descends upon the church.

III.

Lord, change my sins into penitential sorrow, my sorrow to petition, my petition to eucharist; that my prayers may be consummate in the adorations of eternity, and the glorious participation of the end of our hopes and prayers, the fulness of never-failing charity, and fruition of thee, O holy

and eternal God, blessed Trinity, and mysterious Unity, to whom all honour, and worship, and thanks, and confession, and glory, be ascribed for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIII.

Of the third additional Precept of Christ; namely, of the Manner of Fasting.

1. FASTING, being directed in order to other ends, as for mortifying the body, taking away that fuel which ministers to the flame of lust, or else relating to what is past, when it becomes an instrument of repentance, and a part of that revenge which St. Paul affirms to be the effect of "godly sorrow," is to take its estimate for value, and its rules for practice, by analogy and proportion to those ends to which it does co-operate[a]. Fasting before the holy sacrament is a custom of the Christian church, and derived to us from great antiquity; and the use of it is, that we might express honour to the mystery, by suffering nothing to enter into our mouths before the symbols. Fasting to this purpose is not an act of mortification, but of reverence and venerable esteem of the instruments of religion, and so is to be understood. And thus also, not to eat or drink before we have said our morning devotions, is esteemed to be a religious decency; and preference of prayer and God's honour before our temporal satisfaction, a symbolical attestation that we esteem the words of God's mouth more than our necessary food. It is like the zeal of Abraham's servant, who would not eat or drink till he had done his errand. And, in pursuance of this act of religion, by the tradition of their fathers, it grew to be a custom of the Jewish nation, that they should not eat bread upon their solemn festivals before the sixth hour; that they might first celebrate the rites of their religious solemnities, before they gave satisfaction to the lesser desires of nature. And, therefore, it was a reasonable satisfaction of the objection made by the assembly against the inspired

[a] Per universum orbem mos iste observatur, ut, in honorem tanti sacramenti, in os Christiani priùs Dominicum corpus intraret quàm cæteri cibi.—*S. Aug. Ep.* 18.

apostles in Pentecost, " These are not drunk, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day [b]:" meaning, that the day being festival, they knew it was not lawful for any of the nation to break their fast before the sixth hour; for else they might easily have been drunk by the third hour, if they had taken their morning's drink in a freer proportion. And true it is, that religion snatches even at little things; and as it teaches us to observe all the great commandments and significations of duty, so it is not willing to pretermit any thing, which, although by its greatness it cannot, of itself, be considerable, yet, by its smallness, it may become a testimony of the greatness of the affection, which would not omit the least minutes of love and duty. And, therefore, when the Jews were scandalized at the disciples of our Lord, for rubbing the ears of corn on the sabbath day, as they walked through the fields early in the morning, they intended their reproof not for breaking the rest of the day, but the solemnity; for eating before the public devotions were finished. Christ excused it by the necessity and charity of the act; they were hungry, and therefore, having so great need, they might lawfully do it: meaning, that such particles and circumstances of religion are not to be neglected, unless where greater cause of charity or necessity does supervene.

2. But when fasting is in order to greater and more concerning purposes, it puts on more religion, and becomes a duty, according as it is necessary or highly conducing to such ends, to the promoting of which we are bound to contribute all our skill and faculties. Fasting is principally operative to mortification of carnal appetites, to which feasting, and full tables, do minister aptness, and power, and inclinations. " When I fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and assembled by troops in the harlots' houses [c]." And if we observe all our own vanities, we shall find that, upon every sudden joy, or a prosperous accident, or an opulent fortune, or a pampered body, and highly spirited and inflamed, we are apt to rashness, levities, inconsiderate expressions, scorn and pride, idleness, wantonness, curiosity,

[b] Plebs autem non assentiebatur horum orationibus; et proculdubio exorta fuisset seditio, nisi concionem solvisset sexta hora superveniens, quæ nostris ad prandium vocare solet sabbatis. — *Joseph. in Vita sua.*

[c] Jer. v. 7.

niceness, and impatience. But fasting is one of those afflictions which reduces our body to want, our spirits to soberness, our condition to sufferance, our desires to abstinence and customs of denial[d]; and so, by taking off the inundations of sensuality, leaves the enemies within in a condition of being easier subdued. Fasting directly advances towards chastity; and, by consequence and indirect powers, to patience, and humility, and indifference. But then it is not the fast of a day that can do this; it is not an act, but a state of fasting, that operates to mortification. A perpetual temperance and frequent abstinence may abate such proportions of strength and nutriment, as to procure a body mortified and lessened in desires. And thus St. Paul "kept his body under," using severities to it for the taming its rebellions and distemperatures. And St. Jerome reports of St. Hilarion, that when he had fasted much, and used coarse diet, and found his lust too strong for such austerities, he resolved to increase it to the degree of mastery, lessening his diet, and increasing his hardship, till he should rather think of food than wantonness[e]. And many times the fastings of some men are ineffectual, because they promise themselves cure too soon, or make too gentle applications, or put less proportions into their antidotes. I have read of a maiden, that, seeing a young man much transported with her love, and that he ceased not to importune her with all the violent pursuits that passion could suggest, told him, she had made a vow to fast forty days with bread and water, of which she must discharge herself, before she could think of corresponding to any other desire; and desired of him, as a testimony of his love, that he also would be a party in the same vow. The young man undertook it, that he might give probation of his love: but, because he had been used to a delicate and nice kind of life, in twenty days he was so weakened, that

[d] Ἐν τῇ κενῇ γαστρὶ τῶν ψαλῶν ἰχὼς οὐκ ἔστι· πεινῶσιν ἡ κύπρις πικρά.—*Achæus apud Athenæum.*

Extraordinarios motus in cippo claudit jejunium. — *S. Cyp.*

Jejunia enim nos contra peccata faciunt fortiores, concupiscentias vincunt, tentationes repellunt, superbiam inclinant, iram mitigant, et omnes bonæ voluntatis affectus ad maturitatem totius virtutis enutriunt. — *S. Leo, Serm. 4. de Jejun.*

Saginantur pugiles qui xerophagiis invalescunt. — *Tertul. de Jejun.*

[e] S. Hieron. in Vita S. Hilarion.

he thought more of death than love; and so got a cure for his intemperance, and was wittily cozened into remedy. But St. Hierom's counsel in this question is most reasonable, not allowing violent and long fasts, and then returns to an ordinary course; for these are too great changes of diet to consist with health, and too sudden and transient to obtain a permanent and natural effect: but "a belly always hungry," a table never full, a meal little and necessary, no extravagances, no freer repast, this is a state of fasting, which will be found to be of best avail, to suppress pungent lusts and rebellious desires[f]. And it were well to help this exercise with the assistances of such austerities which teach patience, and ingenerate a passive fortitude, and accustom us to a despite of pleasures, and which are consistent with our health. For if fasting be left to do the work alone, it may chance either to spoil the body, or not to spoil the lust. Hard lodging, uneasy garments, laborious postures of prayer, journeys on foot, sufferance of cold, paring away the use of ordinary solaces, denying every pleasant appetite, rejecting the most pleasant morsels; these are in the rank of "bodily exercises," which, though, as St. Paul says, of themselves, "they profit little," yet they accustom us to acts of self-denial in exterior instances, and are not useless to the designs of mortifying carnal and sensual lusts. They have "a proportion of wisdom[g]" with these cautions, viz. "in will-worship," that is, in voluntary susception, when they are not imposed as necessary religion[h]; "in humility," that is, without contempt of others that use them not; "in neglecting of the body," that is, when they are done for discipline and mortification, that the flesh, by such handlings and rough usages, become less satisfied, and more despised.

3. As fasting hath respect to the future, so also to the present; and so it operates in giving assistance to prayer. There is a "kind of devil that is not to be ejected but by prayer and fasting," that is, prayer elevated and made intense by a defecate and pure spirit, not laden with the burden of

[f] Parcus cibus et venter semper esuriens triduana jejunia superant.—*S. Hieron. Ep.* 8. *ad Demetriad.*

[g] Coloss. ii. 23. Λόγον σοφίας.

[h] Ἐι τις ἐπίσκοπος, &c. γάμου, καὶ κρεῶν καὶ οἴνου, οὐ δι' ἄσκησιν, ἀλλὰ διὰ βδελυρίαν ἀπέχεται, ἢ διαβούσθω, ἢ καθαιρείσθω.—*Can. Apost.* 50.

meat and vapours. St. Basil affirms, that there are certain angels deputed by God to minister, and to describe all such in every church who mortify themselves by fasting[i]; as if paleness and a meagre visage were that "mark in the forehead," which the angel observed when he signed the saints in Jerusalem to escape the judgment. Prayer is the wings of the soul[k], and fasting is the wings of prayer. Tertullian calls it "the nourishment of prayer[l]." But this is a discourse of Christian philosophy; and he that chooses to do any act of spirit, or understanding, or attention, after a full meal, will then perceive that abstinence had been the better disposition to any intellectual and spiritual action. And, therefore, the church of God ever joined fasting to their more solemn offices of prayer. The apostles "fasted and prayed, when they laid their hands," and invocated the Holy Ghost upon Saul and Barnabas[m]. And these also, "when they had prayed with fasting, ordained elders in the churches of Lystra and Iconium[n]." And the vigils of every holy day tell us, that the devotion of the festival is promoted by the fast of the vigils.

4. But when fasting relates to what is past, it becomes an instrument of repentance[o], it is a punitive and an afflictive action, an effect of godly sorrow, a testimony of contrition, "a judging of ourselves, and chastening our bodies, that we be not judged of the Lord." The fast of the Ninevites, and the fast the prophet Joel calls for[p], and the discipline of the Jews in the rites of expiation, proclaim this usefulness of fasting in order to repentance. And, indeed, it were a strange repentance that had no sorrow in it, and a stranger sorrow that had no affliction; but it were the strangest scene of affliction in the world, when the sad and afflicted person shall eat freely, and delight himself, and to the banquets of a full table serve up the chalice of tears and

[i] Serm. 5. de Jejun.

[k] Jejunium animæ nostræ alimentum, leves ei pennas producens.—*S. Bern. Serm. in Vigil. S. Andreæ.*

Ἀκρίδας ἰσθίοντα Ἰωάννην, καὶ πτεροφυήσαντα τὴν ψυχήν, dixit S. Chrysost.

[l] Jejuniis preces alere, lacrymari, et mugire noctes diesque ad Dominum. —*Tertull.*

[m] Acts, xiii. 1, 2.

[n] Acts, xiv. 23.

[o] Μετάνοια χωρὶς πικρίας ἀργή.—*S. Basil.*

[p] Joel, ii. 15. Levit. xxiii. 27, &c. Isa. xxii. 12.

sorrow, and no bread of affliction[q]. Certainly he that makes much of himself, hath no great indignation against the sinner, when himself is the man. And it is but a gentle revenge and an easy judgment, when the sad sinner shall do penance in good meals, and expiate his sin with sensual satisfaction. So that fasting relates to religion, in all variety and difference of time: it is an antidote against the poison of sensual temptations, an advantage to prayer, and an instrument of extinguishing the guilt and the affections of sin, by judging ourselves, and representing, in a judicatory of our own, even ourselves being judges, that sin deserves condemnation, and the sinner merits a high calamity. Which excellences I repeat in the words of Baruch the scribe, he that was amanuensis to the prophet Jeremy: "The soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, and the eyes that fail, and the hungry soul, will give thee praise and righteousness, O Lord[r]."

5. But now, as fasting hath divers ends, so also it hath divers laws. If fasting be intended as an instrument of prayer, it is sufficient that it be of that quality and degree that the spirit be clear, and the head undisturbed[s], an ordinary act of fast, an abstinence from a meal, or a deferring it, or a lessening it when it comes, and the same abstinence repeated, according to the solemnity and intendment of the offices. And this is evident in reason, and the former instances, and the practice of the church, dissolving some of her fasts, which were in order only to prayer, by noon, and as soon as the great and first solemnity of the day is over. But if fasting be intended as a punitive act, and an instrument of repentance, it must be greater. St. Paul, at his conversion, continued three days without eating or drinking. It must have in it so much affliction as to express the indignation,

[q] Οὐ σιτίον, οὐ πότον ἔξεστι προσενέγκασθαι.— *Philo.*

Pœnitentia de ipso quoque habitu ac victu mandat, sacco et cineri incubare, corpus sordibus obscurare, animum mœroribus dejicere, atque illa quæ peccavit tristi tractatione mutare.— *Tertul. de Pœnit.* c. 9.

[r] Baruch, ii. 18.

Lautè edere et meraciùs bibere rusticitatis erat apud veteres. Unde ἐπισιτιδίζειν, et Θρῃκία ἄμυστις, apud Callimachum: et in proverbium abiit, ἡ πλησμονὴ τῶν βαρβάρων· et apud Theophrastum, δεινῶς φαγεῖν, καὶ ζωρότερον πιεῖν, rusticorum esse notatur, Περὶ ἀγροικίας.

[s] Παχεῖα γαστὴρ λεπτὸν οὐ τίκτει νόον.

and to condemn the sin, and to judge the person. And although the measure of this cannot be exactly determined, yet the general proportion is certain; for a greater sin there must be a greater sorrow, and a greater sorrow must be attested with a greater penalty. And Ezra declares his purpose thus: "I proclaimed a fast, that we might afflict ourselves before God[t]." Now this is no farther required, nor is it in this sense farther useful, but that it be a trouble to the body, an act of judging and severity; and this is to be judged by proportion to the sorrow and indignation, as the sorrow is to the crime. But this affliction needs not to leave any remanent effect upon the body; but such transient sorrow, which is consequent to the abstinence of certain times designed for the solemnity, is sufficient as to this purpose. Only it is to be renewed often, as our repentance must be habitual and lasting; but it may be commuted with other actions of severity and discipline, according to the customs of a church, or the capacity of the persons, or the opportunity of circumstances. But if the fasting be intended for mortification, then it is fit to be more severe and medicinal, by continuance, and quantity, and quality. To repentance, total abstinences without interruption, that is, during the solemnity, short and sharp, are most apt: but towards the mortifying a lust, those sharp and short fasts are not reasonable; but a diet of fasting, an habitual subtraction of nutriment from the body, a long and lasting austerity, increasing in degrees, but not violent in any. And in this sort of fasting we must be highly careful we do not violate a duty by fondness of an instrument; and because we intend fasting as a help to mortify the lust, let it not destroy the body, or retard the spirit, or violate our health, or impede us in any part of our necessary duty. As we must be careful that our fast be reasonable, serious, and apt to the end of our designs; so we must be curious, that by helping one duty uncertainly, it do not certainly destroy another. Let us do it like honest persons and just, without artifices and hypocrisy; but let us also do it like wise persons, that it be neither in itself unreasonable, nor, by accident, become criminal.

[t] Ezra, viii. 21. Dan. x. 12. Psal. xxxv. 13. Levit. xvi. 29, 30, 31. Isa. lviii. 3.

6. In the pursuance of this discipline of fasting, the doctors of the church and guides of souls have not unusefully prescribed other annexes and circumstances; as that all the other acts of deportment be symbolical to our fasting. If we fast for mortification, let us entertain nothing of temptation, or semblance to invite a lust; no sensual delight, no freer entertainments of our body, to countenance or corroborate a passion. If we fast that we may pray the better, let us remove all secular thoughts for that time; for it is vain to alleviate our spirits of the burden of meat and drink, and to depress them with the loads of care. If for repentance we fast, let us be most curious that we do nothing contrary to the design of repentance, knowing that a sin is more contrary to repentance than fasting is to sin; and it is the greatest stupidity in the world to do that thing which I am now mourning for, and for which I do judgment upon myself. And let all our actions also pursue the same design, helping one instrument with another, and being so zealous for the grace, that we take in all the aids we can to secure the duty. For to fast from flesh, and to eat delicate fish; not to eat meat, but to drink rich wines freely; to be sensual in the objects of our other appetites, and restrained only in one; to have no dinner, and that day to run on hunting, or to play at cards; are not handsome instances of sorrow, or devotion, or self-denial. It is best to accompany our fasting with the retirements of religion, and the enlargements of charity, giving to others what we deny to ourselves. These are proper actions: and although not in every instance necessary to be done at the same time, (for a man may give his alms in other circumstances, and not amiss;) yet, as they are very convenient and proper to be joined in that society, so to do any thing contrary to religion or to charity, to justice or to piety, to the design of the person, or the design of the solemnity, is to make that become a sin which, of itself, was no virtue, but was capable of being hallowed by the end and the manner of its execution.

7. This discourse hath hitherto related to private fasts, or else to fasts indefinitely. For, what rules soever every man is bound to observe in private, for fasting piously, the same rules the governors of a church are to intend, in their public prescription. And when once authority hath

intervened, and proclaimed a fast, there is no new duty incumbent upon the private, but that we obey the circumstances, letting them to choose the time and the end for us: and though we must prevaricate neither, yet we may improve both; we must not go less, but we may enlarge; and when fasting is commanded only for repentance, we may also use it to prayers, and to mortification. And we must be curious that we do not obey the letter of the prescription, and violate the intention, but observe all that care in public fasts which we do in private; knowing that our private ends are included in the public, as our persons are in the communion of saints, and our hopes in the common inheritance of sons: and see that we do not fast in order to a purpose, and yet use it so as that it shall be to no purpose. Whosoever so fasts as that it be not effectual in some degree towards the end, or so fasts that it be accounted, of itself, a duty and an act of religion, without order to its proper end, makes his act vain, because it is unreasonable; or vain, because it is superstitious.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesu, who didst, for our sake, fast forty days and forty nights, and hast left to us thy example, and thy prediction, that, in the days of thy absence from us, we, thy servants, and children of thy bride-chamber, should fast; teach us to do this act of discipline so, that it may become an act of religion. Let us never be like Esau, valuing a dish of meat above a blessing; but let us deny our appetites of meat and drink, and accustom ourselves to the yoke, and subtract the fuel of our lusts, and the incentives of all our unworthy desires: that, our bodies being free from the intemperances of nutriment, and our spirits from the load and pressure of appetite, we may have no desires but of thee; that our outward man, daily decaying by the violence of time, and mortified by the abatements of its too free and unnecessary support; it may, by degrees, resign to the entire dominion of the soul, and may pass from vanity to piety, from weakness to ghostly strength, from darkness and mixtures of impurity

to great transparences and clarity, in the society of a beatified soul, reigning with thee, in the glories of eternity, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIV.

Of the Miracles which Jesus wrought, for Confirmation of his Doctrine, during the whole Time of his Preaching.

1. WHEN Jesus had ended his sermon on the mount, he descended into the vallies, to consign his doctrine, by the power of miracles, and the excellency of a rare example; that he might not lay a yoke upon us which himself also would not bear. But as he became "the author," so also "the finisher of our faith;" what he designed in proposition, he represented in his own practice[a]; and by these acts made a new sermon, teaching all prelates and spiritual persons to descend from their eminence of contemplation, and the authority and business of their discourses, to apply themselves to do more material and corporal mercies to afflicted persons, and to preach by example, as well as by their homilies. For he that teaches others well, and practises contrary, is like a fair candlestick, bearing a goodly and bright taper, which sends forth light to all the house, but round about itself there is a shadow and circumstant darkness. The prelate should be "the light," consuming and spending itself, to enlighten others; scattering his rays round about, from the angles of contemplation, and from the corners of practice; but himself always tending upwards, till at last he expires into the element of love and celestial fruition.

2. But the miracles which Jesus did, were next to infinite; and every circumstance of action that passed from him, as it was intended for mercy, so also for doctrine; and the impotent or diseased persons were not more cured, than we instructed. But, because there was nothing in the actions,

[a] Nec monstravit tantùm, sed etiam præcessit, ne quis difficultatis gratiâ iter virtutis horreret. — *Lactant.*

Ἅπαντές ἐσμεν εἰς τὸ νουθετεῖν σοφοὶ,
Αὐτοὶ δ' ἁμαρτάνοντες οὐ γινώσκομεν. — *Menand.*

Ennodius in vita Epiphanii: Pingebat actibus suis paginam quam legisset; et quod liber docuerat, vita signabat.

but what was a pursuance of the doctrines delivered in his sermons, in the sermon we must look after our duty, and look upon his practice as a verification of his doctrine, and instrumental also to other purposes. Therefore, in general, if we consider his miracles, we shall see that he did design them to be a compendium of faith and charity[b]. For he chose to instance his miracles in actions of mercy, that all his powers might especially determine upon bounty and charity; and yet his acts of charity were so miraculous, that they became an argument of the Divinity of his person and doctrine. Once he turned water into wine, which was a mutation by a supernatural power, in a natural suscipient, where a person was not the subject, but an element; and yet this was done to rescue the poor bridegroom from affront and trouble, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. All the rest, (unless we except his walking upon the waters,) during his natural life, were actions of relief and mercy, according to the design of God, manifesting his power most chiefly in showing mercy.

3. The great design of miracles was to prove his mission from God, to convince the world of sin, to demonstrate his power of forgiving sins, to endear his precepts; and that his disciples "might believe in him, and that, believing, they might have life through his name[c]." For he, to whom God, by doing miracles, gave testimony from heaven, must needs be sent from God; and he who had received power to restore nature, and to create new organs, and to extract from incapacities, and from privations to reduce habits, was Lord of nature, and, therefore, of all the world. And this could not but create great confidence in his disciples, that himself would verify those great promises, upon which he established his law. But that the argument of miracles might be infallible, and not apt to be reproved, we may observe its eminence by divers circumstances of probability, heightened up to the degree of moral demonstration.

4. First: The holy Jesus "did miracles which no man" (before him, or at that time) "ever did[d]." Moses smote the rock, and water gushed out; but he could not turn that water into wine. Moses cured no diseases, by the empire of his

[b] Acts, x. 38. [c] John, xx. 31, x. 38, v. 36. [d] John, xv. 24.

will, or the word of his mouth; but Jesus "healed all infirmities." Elisha raised a dead child to life; but Jesus raised one who had been dead four days, and buried, and corrupted. Elias, and Samuel, and all the prophets, and the succession of the high priests in both the temples, put all together, never did so many or so great miracles as Jesus did. He cured leprous persons by his touch; he restored sight to the blind, who were such not by any intervening accident, hindering the act of the organ, but by nature, who were "born blind," and whose eyes had not any natural possibility to receive sight; who could never see without creating of new eyes for them, or some integral part co-operating to vision; and, therefore, the miracle was wholly an effect of a Divine power, for nature did not at all co-operate; or, that I may use the elegant expression of Dante, it was such

——— à cui natura
Non scaldò ferro mai, ne battè ancùde,

for which nature never did heat the iron, nor beat the anvil. He made crooked limbs become straight, and the lame to walk; and habitual diseases and inveterate, of eighteen years' continuance, (and once of thirty-eight,) did disappear at his speaking, like darkness at the presence of the sun. He cast out devils, who, by the majesty of his person, were forced to confess and worship him; and yet, by his humility and restraints, were commanded silence, or to go whither he pleased; and without his leave, all the powers of hell were as infirm and impotent as a withered member, and were not able to stir. He raised three dead persons to life; he fed thousands of people, with two small fishes and five little barley cakes: and, as a consummation of all power and all miracles, he foretold, and verified it, that himself would rise from the dead after three days' sepulture. But when himself had told them, he did miracles "which no man else ever did," they were not able to reprove his saying with one single instance; but the poor blind man found him out one instance, to verify his assertion: "It was yet never heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind."

5. Secondly: The scene of his preaching and miracles was Judæa, which was the pale of the church, and God's enclosed portion, "of whom were the oracles and the fathers, and of

whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ was to come," and to whom he was promised. Now, since these miracles were for verification of his being the Christ, the promised Messias, they were then to be esteemed a convincing argument; when all things else concurring, as the predictions of the prophets the synchronisms, and the capacity of his person, he brought miracles to attest himself to be the person so declared and signified. God would not suffer his people to be abused by miracles, nor from heaven would speak so loud, in testimony of any thing contrary to his own will and purposes. They to whom he gave the oracles, and the law, and the predictions of the Messias, and declared beforehand, that at the coming of the Messias " the blind should see, the lame should walk, and the deaf should hear, the lepers should be cleansed, and to the poor the Gospel should be preached[e]," could not expect a greater conviction for acceptation of a person, than, when that happened, which God himself, by his prophets, had consigned as his future testimony; and if there could have been deception in this, it must needs have been inculpable in the deceived person, to whose error a Divine prophecy had been both nurse and parent. So that, taking the miracles Jesus did, in that conjunction of circumstances, done to that people to whom all their oracles were transmitted by miraculous verifications; miracles so many, so great, so accidentally, and yet so regularly, to all comers and necessitous persons that prayed it, after such predictions and clearest prophecies, and these prophecies owned by himself, and sent, by way of symbol and mysterious answer, to John the Baptist, to whom he described his office, by recounting his miracles in the words of the prediction; there cannot be any fallibility or weakness pretended to this instrument of probation, applied, in such circumstances, to such a people, who, being dear to God, would be preserved from invincible deceptions; and, being commanded by him to expect the Messias in such an equipage of power and demonstration of miracles, were, therefore, not deceived, nor could they, because they were bound to accept it.

6. Thirdly: So that now, we must not look upon these miracles as an argument primarily intended to convince the

[e] Isa. xxxv. 4, 5. Matt. xi. 5.

Gentiles, but the Jews. It was a high probability to them also, and so it was designed also, in a secondary intention: but it could not be an argument to them so certain, because it was destitute of two great supporters. For they neither believed the prophets, foretelling the Messias to be such, nor yet saw the miracles done; so that they had no testimony of God beforehand, and were to rely upon human testimony for the matter of fact; which, because it was fallible, could not infer a necessary conclusion, alone and of itself, but it put on degrees of persuasion, as the testimony had degrees of certainty or universality; that they also "which see not, and yet have believed," might "be blessed." And, therefore, Christ sent his apostles to convert the Gentiles, and supplied, in their case, what in his own could not be applicable, or so concerning them. For he sent them to do miracles in the sight of the nations, that they might not doubt the matter of fact; and prepared them also with a prophecy, foretelling that they should do the same, and greater miracles than he did. They had greater prejudices to contest against, and a more unequal distance from belief, and aptnesses to credit such things; therefore it was necessary that the apostles should do greater miracles, to remove the greater mountains of objection. And they did so; and by doing it in pursuance and testimony of the ends of Christ and Christianity, verified the fame and celebrity of their Master's miracles, and represented to all the world his power, and his veracity, and his Divinity.

7. Fourthly: For when the holy Jesus appeared upon the stage of Palestine, all things were quiet, and at rest from prodigy and wonder; nay, John the Baptist, who, by his excellent sanctity and austerities, had got great reputation to his person and doctrines, yet "did no miracle;" and no man else did any, save some few exorcists among the Jews cured some demoniacs and distracted people. So that, in this silence, a prophet, appearing with signs and wonders, had nothing to lessen the arguments, no opposite of like power, or appearances of a contradictory design. And, therefore, it persuaded infinitely, and was certainly operative upon all persons, whose interest and love of the world did not destroy the piety of their wills, and put their understanding into fetters. And Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, being con-

vinced, said, " We know that thou art a doctor sent from God; for no man can do those things which thou doest, unless God be with him[f]." But when the devil saw what great affections and confidences these miracles of Christ had produced in all persons, he too late strives to lessen the argument, by playing an after-game; and weakly endeavours to abuse vicious persons, (whose love to their sensual pleasures was of power to make them take any thing for argument to retain them,) by such low, few, inconsiderable, uncertain, and suspicious instances, that it grew to be the greatest confirmation and extrinsical argument in behalf of religion, that either friend or foe, upon his own industry, could have represented. Such as were the making an image speak, or fetching fire from the clouds; and that the images of Diana, Cyndias, and Vesta, among the Jasiæans, would admit no rain to wet them, or cloud to darken them; and that the bodies of them who entered into the temple of Jupiter, in Arcadia, would cast no shadow[g]: which things Polybius himself, one of their own superstition, laughs at, as impostures, and says they were no way to be excused, unless the pious purpose of the inventors did take off from the malice of the lie. But the miracles of Jesus were confessed, and wondered at, by Josephus; were published to all the world by his own disciples, who never were accused, much less convicted, of forgery; and they were acknowledged by Celsus[h] and Julian[i], the greatest enemies of Christ.

8. But farther yet, themselves gave it out, that one Caius was cured of his blindness by Æsculapius, and so was Valerius Aper; and at Alexandria, Vespasian cured a man of the gout by treading upon his toes, and a blind man with spittle. And when Adrian, the emperor, was sick of a fever, and would have killed himself, it is said, two blind persons were cured by touching him, whereof one of them told him that he also should recover[k]. But although Vespasian, by the help of Apollonius Tyaneus, who was his familiar, who also had the

[f] John, iii. 2.

[g] Lib. xvi. Hist.

[h] Ἐνομίσατε αὐτὸν εἶναι υἱὸν Θεοῦ, ἐπεὶ χωλοὺς καὶ τυφλοὺς ἐθεράπευσε; dixit Celsus apud Origen.

[i] Εἰ μή τις οἴεται τοὺς κυλλοὺς καὶ τυφλοὺς ἰάσασθαι, καὶ δαιμονιῶντας ἐξορκίζειν, τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων εἶναι, &c.—*Julian. apud Cyril.* lib. vi.

[k] Spartianus in Adriano; qui addit, Marium Maximum dixisse hæc facta fuisse per simulationem.

devil to be his, might do any thing within the power of nature, or by permission might do much more; yet, besides that this was of an uncertain and less credible report, if it had been true, it was also infinitely short of what Christ did, and was a weak, silly imitation, and usurping of the argument, which had already prevailed upon the persuasions of men, beyond all possibility of confutation. And for that of Adrian, to have reported it is enough to make it ridiculous; and it had been a strange power to have cured two blind persons, and yet be so unable to help himself, as to attempt to kill himself, by reason of anguish, impatience, and despair.

9. Fifthly: When the Jews and Pharisees believed not Christ for his miracles, and yet perpetually called for a sign, he refused to give them a sign, which might be less than their prejudice, or the persuasions of their interest; but gave them one, which alone is greater than all the miracles which ever were done, or said to be done, by any antichrist, or the enemies of the religion put all together; a miracle which could have no suspicion of imposture; a miracle without instance, or precedent, or imitation: and that is, Jesus's lying in the grave three days and three nights, and then rising again, and appearing to many, and conversing for forty days together; giving probation of his rising, of the verity of his body; making a glorious promise, which at Pentecost was verified, and speaking such things, which became precepts and parts of the law for ever after.

10. Sixthly: I add two things more to this consideration. First, that the apostles did such miracles, which were infinitely greater than the pretensions of any adversary, and inimitable by all the powers of man or darkness. They raised the dead, they cured all diseases by their very shadow passing by, and by the touch of garments; they converted nations, they foretold future events, they themselves spake with tongues, and they gave the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands, which enabled others to speak languages, which immediately before they understood not, and to cure diseases, and to eject devils. Now, supposing miracles to be done by Gentile philosophers and magicians after; yet when they fall short of these in power, and yet teach a contrary doctrine, it is a demonstration that it is a lesser power, and, therefore, the doctrine not of Divine authority and sanction. And it

is remarkable, that, among all the Gentiles, none ever reasonably pretended to a power of casting out devils. For the devils could not get so much by it, as things then stood: and besides, in whose name should they do it, who worshipped none but devils and false gods? which is too violent presumption, that the devil was the architect in all such buildings. And when the seven sons of Sceva[1], who was a Jew, (amongst whom it was sometimes granted to cure demoniacs,) offered to exorcise a possessed person, the devil would by no means endure it, but beat them for their pains. And yet, because it might have been for his purpose to have enervated the reputation of St. Paul, and, by a voluntary cession, equalled St. Paul's enemies to him, either the devil could not go out but at the command of a Christian, or else to have gone out would have been a disservice and ruin to his kingdom: either of which declares, that the power of casting out devils is a testimony of God, and a probation of the divinity of a doctrine, and a proper argument of Christianity.

11. Seventhly: But, besides this, I consider, that the holy Jesus, having first possessed, upon just title, all the reasonableness of human understanding by his demonstration of a miraculous power, in his infinite wisdom knew that the devil would attempt to gain a party by the same instrument, and therefore so ordered it, that the miracles which should be done, or pretended to, by the devil, or any of the enemies of the cross of Christ, should be a confirmation of Christianity, not do it disservice; for he foretold that antichrist and other enemies "should come in prodigies, and lying wonders and signs." Concerning which, although it may be disputed whether they were truly miracles, or mere deceptions and magical pretences; yet, because they were such which the people could not discern from miracles really such, therefore it is all one, and in this consideration are to be supposed such: but, certainly, he that could foretell such a future contingency, or such a secret of predestination, was able also to know from what principle it came; and we have the same reason to believe that antichrist shall do miracles to evil purposes, as that he shall do any at all; he that foretold

[1] Acts, xix.

us of the man, foretold us also of the imposture, and commanded us not to trust him. And it had been more likely for antichrist to prevail upon Christians by doing no miracles, than by doing any: for if he had done none, he might have escaped without discovery; but by doing miracles, as he verified the wisdom and prescience of Jesus, so he declared to all the church that he was the enemy of their Lord, and therefore less likely to deceive: for which reason it is said, that "he shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect;" that is therefore not possible, because that by which he insinuates himself to others, is by the elect, the church, and chosen of God, understood to be his sign and mark of discovery, and a warning. And, therefore, as the prophecies of Jesus were an infinite verification of his miracles, so also this prophecy of Christ concerning antichrist disgraces the reputation and faith of the miracles he shall act. The old prophets foretold of the Messias, and of his miracles of power and mercy, to prepare for his reception and entertainment: Christ alone, and his apostles from him, foretold of antichrist, and that he should come in all miracles of deception and lying; that is, with true or false miracles to persuade a lie: and this was to prejudice his being accepted, according to the law of Moses[m]. So that, as all that spake of Christ, bade us believe him for the miracles; so all that foretold of antichrist, bade us disbelieve him the rather for his: and the reason of both is the same, because the mighty and "surer word of prophecy," as St. Peter calls it, being the greatest testimony in the world of a Divine principle, gives authority, or reprobates, with the same power. They who are the predestinate of God, and they that are the *præsciti*, the foreknown and marked people, must needs stand or fall to the Divine sentence; and such must this be acknowledged: for no enemy of the cross, not the devil himself, ever foretold such a contingency, or so rare, so personal, so voluntary, so unnatural an event, as this of the great antichrist.

12. And thus the holy Jesus, having showed forth the treasures of his Father's wisdom, in revelations and holy precepts, and, upon the stock of his Father's greatness, having dispended and demonstrated great power in miracles;

[m] Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3.

and these being instanced in acts of mercy, he mingled the glories of heaven to transmit them to earth, to raise us up to the participations of heaven: he was pleased, by healing the bodies of infirm persons, to invite their spirits to his discipline, and by his power to convey healing, and by that mercy, to lead us into the treasures of revelation; that both bodies and souls, our wills and understandings, by Divine instruments, might be brought to Divine perfections in the participations of a Divine nature. It was a miraculous mercy that God should look upon us in our blood, and a miraculous condescension that his Son should take our nature; and even this favour we could not believe without many miracles: and so contrary was our condition to all possibilities of happiness, that if salvation had not marched to us all the way in miracle, we had perished in the ruins of a sad eternity. And now it would be but reasonable, that, since God, for our sakes, hath rescinded so many laws of natural establishment, we also, for his, and for our own, would be content to do violence to those natural inclinations, which are also criminal when they derive into action. Every man living in the state of grace is a perpetual miracle, and his passions are made reasonable, as his reason is turned to faith, and his soul to spirit, and his body to a temple, and earth to heaven; and less than this will not dispose us to such glories, which, being the portion of saints and angels, and the nearest communications with God, are infinitely above what we see, or hear, or understand.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, who didst receive great power, that by it thou mightest convey thy Father's mercies to us, impotent and wretched people; give me grace to believe that heavenly doctrine, which thou didst ratify with arguments from above, that I may fully assent to all those mysterious truths which integrate that doctrine and discipline, in which the obligations of my duty, and the hopes of my felicity, are deposited. And to all those glorious verifications of thy goodness and thy power add also this miracle, that I, who am stained with leprosy of sin, may be cleansed, and my eyes may be opened, that I may see the wondrous

things of thy law; and raise thou me up from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that I may for ever walk in the land of the living, abhorring the works of death and darkness: that as I am, by thy miraculous mercy, partaker of the first, so also I may be accounted worthy of the second resurrection; and as by faith, hope, charity, and obedience, I receive the fruit of thy miracles in this life, so, in the other, I may partake of thy glories, which is a mercy above all miracles. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Lord, I believe; help mine unbelief: and grant that no indisposition or incapacity of mine may hinder the wonderful operations of thy grace; but let it be thy first miracle to turn my water into wine, my barrenness into fruitfulness, my aversations from thee into unions and intimate adhesions to thy infinity, which is the fountain of mercy and power. Grant this for thy mercy's sake, and for the honour of those glorious attributes, in which thou hast revealed thyself and thy Father's excellencies to the world, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

ΆΓΙΟΣ ΙΣΧΥΡΌΣ.

THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART III.

BEGINNING AT THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING UNTIL HIS ASCENSION.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS LADY,

THE

LADY FRANCES,

COUNTESS OF CARBERY.

MADAM,

SINCE the Divine Providence hath been pleased to bind up the great breaches of my little fortune, by your charity and nobleness of a religious tenderness, I account it an excellent circumstance and handsomeness of condition, that I have the fortune of St. Athanasius, to have my persecution relieved and comforted by an honourable and excellent lady; and I have nothing to return for this honour done to me, but to do as the poor paralytics and infirm people in the Gospel did, when our blessed Saviour cured them; they went and told it to all the country, and made the vicinage full of the report, as themselves were of health and joy. And, although I know the modesty of your person and religion had rather do favours than own them, yet give me leave to draw aside the curtain and retirement of your charity; for I had rather your virtue should blush, than my unthankfulness make me

ashamed. Madam, I intended by this address, not only to return you spirituals for your temporals, but to make your noble usages of me and mine to become, like your other charities, productive of advantages to the standers by. For, although the beams of the sun, reflected from a marble, return not home to the body and fountain of light; yet they that walk below, feel the benefit of a doubled heat: so whatever reflections or returns of your favours I can make, although they fall short of what your worth does most reasonably challenge, and can proceed but towards you with forward desires and distant approaches; yet I am desirous to believe, that those who walk between us, may receive assistances from this intercourse, and the following papers may be auxiliary to the enkindling of their piety, as to the confirming and establishing yours. For, although the great prudence of your most noble lord, and the modesties of your own temperate and sweeter dispositions, become the great endearments of virtue to you; yet, because it is necessary that you make religion the business of your life, I thought it not an impertinent application, to express my thankfulness to your Honour, by that which may best become my duty and my gratitude, because it may do you the greatest service. Madam, I must beg your pardon, that I have opened the sanctuary of your retired virtues; but I was obliged to publish the endearments and favours of your noble lord and yourself, towards me and my relatives: for as your hands are so clasped, that one ring is the ligature of them both;

so I have found emanations from that conjuncture of hands, with a consent so forward and apt, that nothing can satisfy for my obligations, but by being in the greatest eminency of thankfulness and humility of person,

MADAM,

Your Honour's most obliged

And most humble Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS LADY,

THE

LADY ALICE,

COUNTESS OF CARBERY.

MADAM,

By the Divine Providence, which disposes all things wisely and charitably, you are, in the affections of your noblest lord, successor to a very dear and most excellent person, and designed to fill up those offices of piety to her dear pledges, which the haste which God made to glorify and secure her, would not permit her to finish. I have much ado to refrain from telling great stories of her wisdom, piety, judgment, sweetness, and religion; but that it would renew the wound, and make our sins bleed afresh, at the memory of that dear saint: and we hope that much of the storm of the Divine anger is over, because he hath repaired the breach by sending you, to go on upon her account, and to give countenance and establishment to all those graces, which were warranted and derived from her example. Madam, the nobleness of your family, your education, and your excellent principles, your fair dispositions, and affable comportment, have not only made all your servants confident of your worthiness and great virtues, but have disposed you so highly and necessarily towards an active and a zealous

religion, that we expect it should grow to the height of a great example; that you may draw others after you, as the eye follows the light, in all the angles of its retirement, or open stages of its publication. In order to this, I have chosen your Honour into a new relation, and have endeared you to this instrument of piety; that if you will please to do it countenance, and employ it in your counsels and pious offices, it may minister to your appetites of religion; which, as they are already fair and prosperous, so they may swell up to a vastness large enough to entertain all the secrets and pleasures of religion: that so you may add to the blessings and prosperities, which already dwell in that family where you are now fixed, new title to more, upon the stock of all those promises, which have secured and entailed felicities upon such persons who have no vanities, but very many virtues. Madam, I could not do you any service, but by doing myself this honour, to adorn my book with this fairest title and inscription of your name. You may observe, but cannot blame, my ambition; so long as it is instanced in a religious service, and means nothing but this, that I may signify how much I honour that person, who is designed to bring new blessings to that family, which is so honourable in itself, and, for so many reasons, dear to me. Madam, upon that account, besides the stock of your own worthiness, I am

Your Honour's most humble

And obedient Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART III.

BEGINNING AT THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING UNTIL HIS ASCENSION.

SECTION XIII.

Of the Second Year of the Preaching of Jesus.

1. When the first year of Jesus, the year of peace and undisturbed preaching, was expired, "there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem[a]." This feast was the second Passover he kept after he began to preach[b]; not the feast of Pentecost, or Tabernacles, both which were past before Jesus came last from Judea: whither when he was now come, he finds an "impotent person lying at the pool of Bethesda, waiting till the angel should move the waters, after which, whosoever first stepped in was cured of his infirmity." The poor man had waited thirty-eight years, and still was prevented, by some other of the hospital that needed a physician. But Jesus, seeing him, had pity on him, cured him, and bade him "take up his bed, and walk." This cure happened to be wrought "upon the Sabbath," for which the Jews were so moved with indignation, that they "thought to slay him:" and their anger was enraged by his calling

[a] John, v. 1, &c. [b] Iren. lib. ii. c. 10.

himself " the Son of God," and " making himself equal with God."

2. Upon occasion of this offence, which they snatched at before it was ministered, Jesus discourses[c] upon " his mission, and derivation of his authority from the Father; of the union between them, and the excellent communications of power, participation of dignity, delegation of judicature, reciprocations and reflections of honour from the Father to the Son, and back again to the Father. He preaches of life and salvation to them that believe in him; prophesies of the resurrection of the dead, by the efficacy of the voice of the Son of God; speaks of the day of judgment, the differing conditions after, of salvation and damnation respectively; confirms his words and mission by the testimony of John the Baptist, of Moses' and the other Scriptures, and of God himself." And still the scandal rises higher: for " in the second Sabbath[d] after the first," that is, in the first day of unleavened bread, which happened the next day after the weekly Sabbath, the disciples of Jesus pull ripe ears of corn, rub them in their hands, and eat them, to satisfy their hunger: for which he offered satisfaction to their scruples, convincing them, that works of necessity are to be permitted, even to the breach of a positive temporary constitution; and that works of mercy are the best serving of God, upon any day whatsoever, or any part of the day, that is vacant to other offices, and proper for a religious festival.

3. But when neither reason nor religion would give them satisfaction, but that they went about to kill him, he withdrew himself from Jerusalem, and returned to Galilee; whither the Scribes and Pharisees followed him, observing his actions, and whether or not he would prosecute that which they called profanation of their Sabbath, by doing acts of mercy upon that day. He still did so: for, entering into one of the synagogues of Galilee upon the Sabbath, Jesus saw a man (whom St. Jerome reports to have been a mason) coming to Tyre, and complaining that his hand was withered[e], and desiring help of him, that he might again be

[c] John, v. 19, &c.

[d] Suidas, voc. σάββατον.

[e] Evangel. Naz. quod S. Hieron. ex Hebr. in Græcum transtulit.
Ἥμισύ μου τέθνηκε, τὸ δ' ἥμισυ λιμὸς ἐλέγχει·
Σῶσόν μου, βασιλεῦ, μουσικὸν ἡμίτονον.

restored to the use of his hands, lest he should be compelled, with misery and shame, to beg his bread. Jesus restored his hand as whole as the other, in the midst of all those spies and enemies. Upon which act, being confirmed in their malice, the Pharisees went forth, and joined with the Herodians, (a sect of people who said Herod was the Messias, because, by the decree of the Roman senate, when the sceptre departed from Judah, he was declared king[f];) and both together took counsel how they might kill him.

4. Jesus therefore departed again to the sea-coast, and his companies increased as his fame; for he was now followed by new "multitudes from Galilee, from Judea, from Jerusalem, from Idumea, from beyond Jordan, from about Tyre and Sidon;" who, hearing the report of his miraculous power, to cure all diseases by the word of his mouth, or the touch of his hand, or the handling his garment, came with their ambulatory hospital of sick and their possessed; and they pressed on him, but to touch him, and were all immediately cured: the devils confessing publicly that he was "the Son of God," till they were upon all such occasions restrained, and compelled to silence.

5. But now Jesus, having commanded a ship to be in readiness against any inconvenience or troublesome pressures of the multitude, "went up into a mountain to pray, and continued in prayer all night," intending to make the first ordination of apostles; which the next day he did, choosing out of the number of his disciples these twelve to be apostles[g]: Simon Peter and Andrew; James and John, the sons of thunder; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James, the son of Alphæus, and Simon the Zelot; Judas, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot. With these, descending from the mountain to the plain, he repeated the same sermon, or much of it, which he had before preached in the first beginning of his prophesyings; that he might publish his Gospel to these new auditors, and also more particularly inform his apostles in "the doctrine of the kingdom:" for now, because

[f] Sic Tertullianus, Epiphanius, Chrysostomus, et Theophylactus, et Hieron. Dialog. advers. Lucif. uno ore affirmant.

[g] Sic et apostolici semper duodenus honoris
Fulget apex, numero menses imitatus et horas,
Omnibus ut rebus semper tibi militet annus. — *Sedul.*

he " saw Israel scattered like sheep having no shepherd," he did purpose to send these twelve abroad, to preach repentance and the approximation of the kingdom; and therefore first instructed them in the mysterious parts of his holy doctrine, and gave them also particular instructions together with their temporary commission for that journey.

6. " For Jesus ' sent them out by two and two, giving them power over unclean spirits,' and to heal all manner of sickness and diseases; telling them they were ' the light,' and ' the eyes,' and ' the salt of the world,' so intimating their duties of diligence, holiness, and incorruption; giving them in charge to preach the Gospel, to dispense their power and miracles freely, as they had received it, to anoint sick persons with oil, not to enter into any Samaritan town, but to ' go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' to provide no *viaticum* for their journeys, but to put themselves upon the religion and piety of their proselytes: he arms them against persecutions, gives them leave to fly the storm from city to city, promises them the assistances of his Spirit, encourages them by his own example of long-sufferance, and by instances of Divine providence, expressed even to creatures of smallest value, and by promise of great rewards, to the confident confession of his name; and furnishes them with some propositions, which are like so many bills of exchange, upon the trust of which they might take up necessaries; promising great retributions, not only to them who quit any thing of value for the sake of Jesus, but to them that offer a cup of water to a thirsty disciple." And with these instructions they departed to preach in the cities.

7. And Jesus, returning to Capernaum, received the address of a faithful centurion of the legion called the Iron Legion[h], (which usually quartered in Judea,) in behalf of his servant, whom he loved, and who was grievously afflicted with the palsy; and healed him, as a reward and honour to his faith. And from thence going to the city Naim, he raised to life the only son of a widow, whom the mourners followed in the street, bearing the corpse sadly to his funeral. Upon the fame of these, and divers other miracles, John the Baptist, who was still in prison, (for he was not put to death

[h] Dio, Hist. Rom. lib. lv.

till the latter end of this year,) sent two of his disciples to him by Divine providence, or else by John's designation, to minister occasion of his greater publication, inquiring if he was the Messias. To whom Jesus returned no answer, but a demonstration taken from the nature of the thing, and the glory of the miracles, saying, " Return to John, and tell him what ye see; for the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised, and the lepers are cleansed, and to the poor the Gospel is preached[1];" which were the characteristic notes of the Messias, according to the predictions of the holy prophets.

8. When John's disciples were gone with this answer, Jesus began to speak concerning John; " of the austerity and holiness of his person, the greatness of his function, the divinity of his commission, saying, that he was ' greater than a prophet, a burning and shining light, the Elias that was to come,' and the consummation or ending of the old prophets: adding withal, that the perverseness of that age was most notorious in the entertainment of himself and the Baptist: for neither could the Baptist, who ' came neither eating nor drinking,' (that, by his austerity and mortified deportment, he might invade the judgment and affections of the people,) nor Jesus, who ' came both eating and drinking,' (that, by a moderate and an affable life, framed to the compliance and common use of men, he might sweetly insinuate into the affections of the multitude,) obtain belief amongst them. They could object against every thing, but nothing could please them. But wisdom and righteousness had a theatre in its own family, and ' is justified of all her children.' Then he proceeds to a more applied reprehension of Capernaum, and Chorazin, and Bethsaida, for being pertinacious in their sins and infidelity, in defiance and reproof of all the mighty works, which had been wrought in them. But these things were not revealed to all dispositions; the wise and the mighty of the world were not subjects prepared for the simplicity and softer impresses of the Gospel, and the downright severity of its sanctions. And therefore Jesus glorified God for the magnifying of his mercy, in that these things, which were ' hid from the great ones,' were ' revealed to

[1] Isa. xxxv. 4, 5.

babes;' and concludes this sermon with an invitation of all wearied and disconsolate persons, loaded with sin and misery, to 'come to him,' promising 'ease to their burdens,' and 'refreshment to their weariness,' and to exchange their heavy pressures into an 'easy yoke,' and a 'light burden.'"

9. When Jesus had ended this sermon, one of the Pharisees[k], named Simon, invited him to "eat with him;" into whose house when he was entered, a certain "woman that was a sinner," abiding there in the city, heard of it; her name was Mary: she had been married to a noble personage, a native of the town and castle of Magdal, from whence she had her name of Magdalen, though she herself was born in Bethany; a widow she was, and prompted by her wealth, liberty, and youth, to an intemperate life, and too free entertainments. She came to Jesus into the Pharisee's house; not (as did the staring multitude) to glut her eyes with the sight of a miraculous and glorious person; nor (as did the centurion, or the Syro-Phœnician, or the ruler of the synagogue,) for cure of her sickness, or in behalf of her friend, or child, or servant; but (the only example of so coming) she came in remorse and regret for her sins, she came to Jesus to lay her burden at his feet, and to present him with a broken heart, and a weeping eye, and great affection, and a box of nard pistic, salutary and precious. For she came trembling, and fell down before him, weeping bitterly for her sins[l], pouring out a flood great enough to "wash the feet" of the blessed Jesus, and "wiping them with the hairs of her head;" after which she "brake the box," and "anointed his feet with ointment." Which expression was so great an ecstacy of love, sorrow, and adoration, that to anoint the feet even of the greatest monarch was long unknown, and in all the pomps and greatnesses of the Roman prodigality it was not used, till Otho taught it to Nero[m]; in whose instance it was by Pliny reckoned for a prodigy of unnecessary profusion, and in itself, without the circumstance of so free a dispensa-

[k] Luke, vii.

[l] ——— purgata recessit
Per gemitum; propriique lavans in gurgite fletûs,
Munda suis lacrymis redit, et detersa capillis. — *Sedul.* lib. iii.

[m] Plin. Natur. Hist. lib. xiii. c. 3. Vide Athen. Deipnosoph. lib. xii. c. 30. Herodotus in Thalia.

tion, it was a present for a prince; and an alabaster box of nard pistic was sent as a present from Cambyses to the king of Ethiopia.

10. When Simon observed this sinner so busy in the expresses of her religion and veneration to Jesus, he thought with himself that this was "no prophet," that did "not know her to be a sinner;" or no just person, that would suffer her to touch him. For, although the Jews' religion did permit harlots of their own nation to live, and enjoy the privileges of their nation, save that their oblations were refused: yet the Pharisees, who pretended to a greater degree of sanctity than others, would not admit them to civil usages, or the benefits of ordinary society; and thought religion itself, and the honour of a prophet, was concerned in the interests of the same superciliousness: and therefore Simon made an objection within himself. Which Jesus knowing, (for he understood his thoughts, as well as his words,) made her apology and his own in a civil question, expressed in a parable of two debtors, to whom a greater and a less debt respectively was forgiven; both of them concluding, that they would love their merciful creditor in proportion to his mercy and donative: and this was the case of Mary Magdalen; to whom, because "much was forgiven, she loved much," and expressed it in characters so large, that the Pharisee might read his own incivilities and inhospitable entertainment of the Master, when it stood confronted with the magnificency of Mary Magdalen's penance and charity.

11. When Jesus had dined, he was presented with the sad sight of a poor demoniac, possessed with a blind and a dumb devil, in whose behalf his friends entreated Jesus, that he would cast the devil out; which he did immediately, and "the blind man saw, and the dumb spake," so much to the amazement of the people, that they ran in so prodigious companies after him, and so scandalized the Pharisees, who thought that, by means of this prophet, their reputation would be lessened and their schools empty, that first a rumour was scattered up and down, from an uncertain principle, but communicated with tumult and apparent noises, that Jesus was "beside himself:" upon which rumour his friends and kindred came together to see, and to make provisions accordingly; and the holy Virgin-mother came

herself, but without any apprehensions of any such horrid accident. The words and things she had from the beginning laid up in her heart, would furnish her with principles exclusive of all apparitions of such fancies; but she came to see what that persecution was, which, under that colour, it was likely the Pharisees might commence.

12. When the mother of Jesus and his kindred came, they found him in a house, encircled with people, full of wonder and admiration: and there the holy Virgin-mother might hear part of her own prophecy verified, that the generations of the earth should call her blessed; for a woman, worshipping Jesus, cried out, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck." To this Jesus replied, not denying her to be highly blessed, who had received the honour of being the mother of the Messias, but advancing the dignities of spiritual excellencies far above this greatest temporal honour in the world: "Yea, rather blessed are they, that hear the word of God, and do it." For, in respect of the issues of spiritual perfections, and their proportionable benedictions, all immunities and temporal honours are empty and hollow blessings; and all relations of kindred disband and empty themselves into the greater channels and floods of divinity.

13. For when, Jesus being in the house, they told him "his mother and his brethren staid for him without;" he told them, those relations were less than the ties of duty and religion: for those dear names of mother and brethren, which are hallowed by the laws of God and the endearments of nature, are made far more sacred when a spiritual cognation does supervene, when the relations are subjected in persons religious and holy: but if they be abstract and separate, the conjunction of persons in spiritual bands, in the same faith, and the same hope, and the union of them in the same mystical head, is an adunation nearer to identity than those distances between parents and children, which are only cemented by the actions of nature, as it is of distinct consideration from the spirit. For Jesus, pointing to his disciples, said, "Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother."

14. But the Pharisees, upon the occasion of the miracles,

renewed the old quarrel: "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub." Which senseless and illiterate objection Christ having confuted, charged them highly upon the guilt of an unpardonable crime, telling them, that the so charging those actions of his, done in virtue of the Divine Spirit, is a sin against the Holy Ghost: and however they might be bold with the Son of Man, and prevarications against his words, or injuries to his person, might, upon repentance and baptism, find a pardon; yet it was a matter of greater consideration to sin against the Holy Ghost; that would find no pardon, here nor hereafter. But taking occasion upon this discourse, he, by an ingenious and mysterious parable, gives the world great caution of recidivation and backsliding after repentance. For if "the devil returns into a house once swept and garnished, he bringeth seven spirits more impure than himself; and the last estate of that man is worse than the first."

15. After this, Jesus went from the house of the Pharisee, and, coming to the sea of Tiberias or Gennesareth, (for it was called the sea of Tiberias from a town on the banks of the lake,) taught the people upon the shore, himself sitting in the ship; but he taught them by parables, under which were hid mysterious senses, which shone through their veil, like a bright sun through an eye closed with a thin eye-lid; it being light enough to show their infidelity, but not to dispel those thick Egyptian darknesses, which they had contracted, by their habitual indispositions and pertinacious aversations. By the parable of "the sower scattering his seed by the way-side, and some on stony, some on thorny, some on good ground," he intimated the several capacities or indispositions of men's hearts, the carelessness of some, the frowardness and levity of others, the easiness and softness of a third; and how they are spoiled with worldliness and cares, and how many ways there are to miscarry, and that but one sort of men receive the word, and bring forth the fruits of a holy life. By the parable of "tares permitted to grow amongst the wheat," he intimated the toleration of dissenting opinions, not destructive of piety or civil societies. By the three parables of the "seed growing insensibly," of the "grain of mustard seed swelling up to a tree," of "a little leaven qualifying the whole lump," he signified the increment of the Gospel, and the blessings upon the apostolical sermons.

16. Which parables when he had privately to his apostles rendered into their proper senses, he added to them two parables, concerning the dignity of the Gospel, comparing it to " treasure hid in a field," and " a jewel of great price, for the purchase" of which every good " merchant must quit all that he hath," rather than miss it: telling them withal, that however purity and spiritual perfections were intended by the Gospel, yet it would not be acquired by every person; but the public professors of Christianity should be a mixed multitude, " like a net, enclosing fishes good and bad." After which discourses, he retired from the sea-side, and went to his own city of Nazareth; where he preached so excellently, upon certain words of the prophet Isaiah [n], that all the people wondered at the wisdom, which he expressed in his divine discourses. But the men of Nazareth did not do honour to the prophet, that was their countryman, because they knew him in all the disadvantages of youth, and kindred, and trade, and poverty; still retaining in their minds the infirmities and humilities of his first years, and keeping the same apprehensions of him, a man, and a glorious prophet, which they had to him, a child, in the shop of a carpenter. But when Jesus, in his sermon, had reproved their infidelity, at which he wondered, and, therefore, did but few miracles there, in respect of what he had done at Capernaum, and intimated the prelation of that city before Nazareth, " they thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built," intending to " throw him down headlong." But his work was not yet finished; therefore he, " passing through the midst of them, went his way."

17. Jesus therefore, departing from Nazareth, went up and down to all the towns and castles of Galilee, attended by his disciples, and certain women, out of whom he had cast unclean spirits; such as were Mary Magdalen, Johanna, wife to Chuza, Herod's steward, Susanna, and some others, who did for him offices of provision, and " ministered to him out of their own substance," and became parts of that holy college, which, about this time, began to be full; because now the apostles were returned from their preaching, full of joy, that the devils were made subject to the word of their

[n] lxi. 1.

mouth, and the empire of their prayers, and invocation of the holy name of Jesus. But their Master gave them a lenitive, to assuage the tumour and excrescence, intimating that such privileges are not solid foundations of a holy joy; but so far as they co-operate toward the great end of God's glory, and their own salvation, to which when they are consigned, and "their names written in heaven," in the book of election, and registers of predestination, then their joy is reasonable, holy, true, and perpetual[o].

18. But when Herod had heard these things of Jesus, presently his apprehensions were such as derived from his guilt; he thought it was John the Baptist who was "risen from the dead," and that these "mighty works" were demonstrations of his power, increased by the superadditions of immortality and diviner influences, made proportionable to the honour of a martyr, and the state of separation[p]. For, a little before this time, Herod had sent to the castle of Macheruns, where John was prisoner, and caused him to be beheaded. His head Herodias buried in her own palace, thinking to secure it against a re-union, lest it should again disturb her unlawful lusts, and disquiet Herod's conscience. But the body the disciples of John gathered up, and carried it with honour and sorrow, and buried it in Sebaste, in the confines of Samaria, making his grave between the bodies of Elizeus and Abdias, the prophets. And about this time was the passover of the Jews.

DISCOURSE XV.

Of the Excellence, Ease, Reasonableness, and Advantages of bearing Christ's Yoke, and living according to his Institution.

1. THE holy Jesus came to break from off our necks two great yokes: the one of sin, by which we were fettered and imprisoned in the condition of slaves and miserable persons; the other, of Moses' law, by which we were kept in pupilage

[o] Vide Discourse of Certainty of Salvation, Num. 3.

[p] Virtutem incolumem odimus,
Sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi. — *Horat.* lib. iii. *Od.* 24.

and minority, and a state of imperfection: and asserted us into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." The first was a despotic empire, and the government of a tyrant: the second was of a school-master, severe, absolute, and imperious; but it was in order to a farther good, yet nothing pleasant in the sufferance and load. And now Christ, having taken off these two, hath put on a third. He quits us of our burden, but not of our duty; and hath changed the former tyranny and the less perfect discipline into the sweetness of paternal regiment, and the excellence of such an institution, whose every precept carries part of its reward in hand, and assurances of after-glories. Moses' law was like sharp and unpleasant physic, certainly painful, but uncertainly healthful. For it was not then communicated to them, by promise and universal revelations, that the end of their obedience should be life eternal: but they were full of hopes it might be so, as we are of health when we have a learned and wise physician. But as yet the reward was in a cloud, and the hopes in fetters and confinement. But the law of Christ is like Christ's healing of diseases; he does it easily, and he does it infallibly. The event is certainly consequent; and the manner of cure is by a touch of his hand, or a word of his mouth, or an approximation to the "hem of his garment," without pain and vexatious instruments. My meaning is, that Christianity is, by the assistance of Christ's Spirit, which he promised us and gave us in the Gospel, made very easy to us: and yet a reward so great is promised, as were enough to make a lame man to walk, and a broken arm endure the burden; a reward great enough to make us willing to do violence to all our inclinations, passions, and desires. A hundred weight to a giant is a light burden, because his strength is disproportionably great, and makes it as easy to him as an ounce is to a child. And yet, if we had not the strength of giants, if the hundred weight were of gold or jewels, a weaker person would think it no trouble to bear that burden, if it were the reward of his portage, and the hire of his labours. The spirit is given to us to enable us, and heaven is promised to encourage us; the first makes us able, and the second makes us willing: and when we have power and affections, we cannot complain of pressure. And this is the meaning of our blessed Saviour's invitation;

"Come to me, for my burden is light, my yoke is easy[a]:" which St. John also observed: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh, even our faith[b]:" that is, our belief of God's promises, the promise of the Spirit for present aid, and of heaven for the future reward, is strength enough to overcome all the world.

2. But besides that God hath made his yoke easy, by exterior supports, more than ever was in any other religion; Christianity is of itself, according to human estimate, a religion more easy and desirable by our natural and reasonable appetites, than sin, in the midst of all its pleasures and imaginary felicities. Virtue hath more pleasure in it than sin, and hath all satisfactions to every desire of man, in order to human and prudent ends; which I shall represent in the consideration of these particulars. 1. To live according to the laws of Jesus is, in some things, most natural, and proportionable to the desires and first intentions of nature. 2. There is in it less trouble than in sin. 3. It conduces infinitely to the content of our lives, and natural and political satisfactions. 4. It is a means to preserve our temporal lives long and healthy. 5. It is most reasonable; and he only is prudent, that does so, and he a fool, that does not. And all this, besides the considerations of a glorious and happy eternity.

3. Concerning the first, I consider that we do very ill, when, instead of making our natural infirmity an instrument of humility, and of recourse to the grace of God, we pretend the sin of Adam to countenance our actual sins, natural infirmity to excuse our malice; either laying Adam in fault, for deriving the disability upon us, or God, for putting us into the necessity. But the evils that we feel in this, are from the rebellion of the inferior appetite against reason, or against any religion, that puts restraint upon our first desires. And, therefore, in carnal and sensual instances accidentally, we find the more natural averseness, because God's laws have put our irascible and concupiscible faculties in fetters

[a] Matt. xi. 30. [b] 1 John, v. 3, 4.

and restraints; yet, in matters of duty, which are of immaterial and spiritual concernment, all our natural reason is a perfect enemy and contradiction to, and a law against, vice. It is natural for us to love our parents, and they who do not, are unnatural; they do violence to those dispositions, which God gave us to the constitution of our nature, and for the designs of virtue: and all those tendernesses of affection, those bowels and relenting dispositions, which are the endearments of parents and children, are also the bands of duty. Every degree of love makes duty delectable: and, therefore, either by nature we are inclined to hate our parents, which is against all reason and experience, or else we are, by nature, inclined to do them all that, which is the effect of love to such superiors, and principles of being and dependence: and every prevarication from the rule, effects, and expresses of love, is a contradiction to nature, and a mortification; to which we cannot be invited by any thing from within, but by something from without, that is violent and preternatural. There are also many other virtues, even in the matter of sensual appetite, which none can lose, but by altering, in some degree, the natural disposition. And I instance in the matter of carnality and uncleanness, to which possibly some natures may think themselves apt and disposed: but yet God hath put into our mouths a bridle, to curb the licentiousness of our speedy appetite, putting into our very natures a principle as strong to restrain it, as there is in us a disposition apt to invite us; and this is also in persons who are most apt to the vice, women and young persons, to whom God hath given a modesty and shame of nature, that the entertainments of lusts may become contradictions to our retreating and backward modesty, more than they are satisfactions to our too forward appetites. It is as great a mortification and violence to nature to blush, as to lose a desire; and we find it true, when persons are invited to confess their sins, or to ask forgiveness publicly, a secret smart is not so violent as a public shame: and, therefore, to do an action which brings shame all along, and opens the sanctuaries of nature, and makes all her retirements public, and dismantles her enclosure, as lust does, and the shame of carnality, hath in it more asperity and abuse to nature, than the short pleasure to which we are invited can repay. There

are unnatural lusts, lusts which are such in their very condition and constitution, that a man must turn a woman, and a woman become a beast, in acting them; and all lusts, that are not unnatural in their own complexion, are unnatural by a consequent and accidental violence. And if lust hath in it dissonancies to nature, there are but few apologies left to excuse our sins upon nature's stock: and all that system of principles and reasonable inducements to virtue, which we call "the law of nature," is nothing else but that firm ligature and incorporation of virtue to our natural principles and dispositions, which whoso prevaricates, does more against nature than he that restrains his appetite. And, besides these particulars, there is not, in our natural discourse, any inclination, directly and by intention of itself, contrary to the love of God, because by God we understand that Fountain of Being which is infinitely perfect in itself, and of great good to us; and whatsoever is so apprehended, it is as natural for us to love, as to love any thing in the world; for we can love nothing but what we believe to be good in itself, or good to us[c]. And beyond this, there are, in nature, many principles and reasons to make an aptness to acknowledge and confess God; and, by the consent of nations, which they also have learned from the dictates of their nature, all men, in some manner or other, worship God. And, therefore, when this, our nature, is determined in its own indefinite principle, to the manner of worship, all acts against the love, the obedience, and the worship of God, are also against nature, and offer it some rudeness and violence. And I shall observe this, and refer it to every man's reason and experience, that the great difficulties of virtue, commonly apprehended, commence not so much upon the stock of nature, as of education and evil habits[d]. Our virtues are difficult, because we at first get ill habits; and these habits must be unrooted before we do well: and that is our trouble.

[c] Ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲ ἄλλο περὶ Θεοῦ ὅ, τι ἂν εἴποιμι, ἢ ὅτι ἀγαθός τε παντάπασιν εἶν, καὶ ξύμπαντα ἐν τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ αὐτοῦ ἔχει. λεγέτω δὲ ὅσπερ γινώσκειν ἕκαστος ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ὅσται, καὶ ἱερεὺς καὶ ἰδιώτης. — *Procop. Gothic.* 1.

Τοιοῦτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσιν ἐνουσιωμένος ὅρκος, ἔχεσθαι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν καὶ ποιητοῦ, καὶ μὴ παραβαίνειν μηδαμῇ τοὺς ὑπ' ἐκείνου διορισθέντας νόμους. — *Hierocl.*

[d] Siquidem Leonides, Alexandri pædagogus, quibusdam eum vitiis imbuit, quæ robustum quoque et jam maximum regem ab illa institutione puerili sunt prosecuta. — *Quintil.* lib. i. c. 1.

But if, by the strictness of discipline and wholesome education, we begin at first in our duty, and the practice of virtuous principles, we shall find virtue made as natural to us, while it is customary and habitual, as we pretend infirmity to be, and propensity to vicious practices. And this we are taught by that excellent Hebrew who said, "Wisdom is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her: she preventeth them that desire her, in making herself first known unto them. Whoso seeketh her early shall have no great travel; for he shall find her sitting at his doors[e].")

4. Secondly: In the strict observances of the law of Christianity there is less trouble than in the habitual courses of sin. For if we consider the general design of Christianity, it propounds to us in this world nothing that is of difficult purchase[f], nothing beyond what God allots us, by the ordinary and common providence, such things which we are to receive without care and solicitous vexation: so that the ends are not big, and the way is easy; and this walked over with much simplicity and sweetness, and those obtained without difficulty. He that propounds to himself to live low, pious, humble, and retired, his main employment is nothing but sitting quiet, and undisturbed with variety of impertinent affairs: but he that loves the world, and its acquisitions, entertains a thousand businesses, and every business hath a world of employment, and every employment is multiplied, and made intricate by circumstances, and every circumstance is to be disputed, and he that disputes ever hath two sides in enmity and opposition; and by this time there is a genealogy, a long descent, and cognation of troubles, branched into so many particulars, that it is troublesome to understand them, and much more to run through them. The ways of virtue are very much upon the defensive, and the work one ,uniform and little; they are like war within a strong castle, if they stand upon their guard, they seldom need to strike a stroke.

[e] Wisd. vi. 12, 13, 14.

[f] Multò difficilius est facere ista quæ facitis. Quid nam quiete otiosius est animi? Quid irâ laboriosius? Quid clementiâ remissius? Quid crudelitate negotiosius? Vacat pudicitia, libido occupatissima est. Omnium denique virtutum tutela facilior est; vitia magno coluntur. — *Seneca.*

In vitiis abit voluptas, manet turpitudo; cùm in rectè factis abeat labor, maneat honestas. — *Muson.*

But a vice is like storming of a fort, full of noise, trouble, labour, danger, and disease. How easy a thing is it to restore the pledge! But if a man means to defeat him that trusted him, what a world of arts must he use to make pretences? To delay first, then to excuse, then to object, then to intricate the business, next to quarrel, then to forswear it, and all the way to palliate his crime, and represent himself honest. And if an oppressing and greedy person have a design to cozen a young heir, or to get his neighbour's land, the cares of every day, and the interruptions of every night's sleep, are more than the purchase is worth; since he might buy virtue at half that watching, and the less painful care of a fewer number of days. A plain story is soonest told, and best confutes an intricate lie; and when a person is examined in judgment, one false answer asks more wit for its support and maintenance than a history of truth[g]. And such persons are put to so many shameful retreats, false colours, fucuses, and daubings with untempered mortar, to avoid contradiction or discovery, that the labour of a false story seems, in the order of things, to be designed the beginning of its punishment. And if we consider how great a part of our religion consists in prayer, and how easy a thing God requires of us, when he commands us to pray for blessings, the duty of a Christian cannot seem very troublesome.

5. And, indeed, I can hardly instance in any vice, but there is visibly more pain in the order of acting and observing it, than in the acquist or promotion of virtue[h]. I have seen drunken persons, in their seas of drink and talk, dread every cup as a blow, and they have used devices and private arts, to escape the punishment of a full draught; and the poor wretch, being condemned, by the laws of drinking, to his measure, was forced and haled to execution; and he suffered it, and thought himself engaged to that person, who, with

[g] Nam statum cujusque ad securitatem melius innocentiâ tueor, quàm eloquentiâ. — *Quintil. Dial. de Orat.*

[h] Quid namque à nobis exigit (religio), quid præstari sibi à nobis jubet, nisi solum tantummodo fidem, castitatem, humilitatem, sobrietatem, misericordiam, sanctitatem, quæ utique omnia non onerant nos, sed ornant. — *Salvian.*

Ἡ ἀρετὴ φαντασίᾳ μὲν ἐστὶ τοῖς πρόχειρον ἔντεχνον ἐργαλεῖον ἔσω θεῖν, μετὰ δὲ πόνου, καὶ ἐξ ἐπιλογισμοῦ συμφέρει. Δυσκολώτερον ἡ κακία τῆς ἀρετῆς. — *S. Chrysost.*

Ὁ πολλὰ πόνου ἐξεμαχήσατο.

much kindness and importunity, invited him to a fever. But, certainly, there was more pain in it, than in the strictness of holy and severe temperance. And he that shall compare the troubles and dangers of an ambitious war, with the gentleness and easiness of peace, will soon perceive, that every tyrant and usurping prince, that snatches at his neighbour's rights, hath two armies, one of men, and the other of cares. Peace sheds no blood, but of the pruned vine; and hath no business, but modest and quiet entertainments of the time, opportune for piety, and circled with reward. But God often punishes ambition and pride with lust; and he sent a "thorn in the flesh," as a corrective to the elevations and *grandezza* of St. Paul, growing up from the multitude of his revelations: and it is not likely the punishment should have less trouble than the crime, whose pleasures and obliquity this was designed to punish. And, indeed, every experience can verify, that an adulterer hath in him the impatience of desires, the burnings of lust, the fear of shame, the apprehensions of a jealous, abused, and an enraged husband[i]. He endures affronts, mistimings, tedious waitings, the dulness of delay, the regret of interruption, the confusion and amazements of discovery, the scorn of a reproached vice, the debasings of contempt upon it; unless the man grows impudent, and then he is more miserable upon another stock. But David was so put to it, to attempt, to obtain, to enjoy Bathsheba, and to prevent the shame of it, that the difficulty was greater than all his wit and power; and it drove him into base and unworthy arts, which discovered him the more, and multiplied his crime. But while he enjoyed the innocent pleasures of his lawful bed, he had no more trouble in it, than there was in inclining his head upon his pillow. The ways of sin are crooked, desert, rocky, and uneven[k]: they are broad, indeed; and there is variety of ruins, and allurements, to entice fools, and a large theatre to act the bloody tragedies of souls upon; but they are nothing smooth, or safe, or delicate. The ways of virtue are strait, but not crooked; narrow, but not unpleasant. There are two vices for one virtue; and, therefore,

[i] ——— et Cecropiæ domûs
Æternum opprobrium, quòd malè barbaras
Regum est ulta libidines. *Hor.* lib. iv. *Od.* 12.

[k] Διοδεύειν ἐρήμους ἀβάτους. — *Wisd.* v. 7.

the way to hell must needs be of greater extent, latitude, and dissemination: but, because virtue is but one way, therefore it is easy, regular, and apt to walk in, without error or diversions. "Narrow is the gate, and strait is the way:" It is true, considering our evil customs and depraved natures, by which we have made it so to us. But God hath made it more passable, by his grace and present aids; and St. John the Baptist receiving his commission to preach repentance, it was expressed in these words: "Make plain the paths of the Lord." Indeed, repentance is a rough and a sharp virtue, and, like a mattock and spade, breaks away all the roughnesses of the passage, and hinderances of sin: but when we enter into the dispositions, which Christ hath designed to us, the way is more plain and easy than the ways of death and hell. Labour it hath in it, just as all things that are excellent; but no confusions, no distractions of thought, no amazements, no labyrinths, and intricacy of counsels: but it is like the labours of agriculture, full of health and simplicity, plain and profitable; requiring diligence, but such in which crafts and painful stratagems are useless and impertinent.) But vice hath oftentimes so troublesome a retinue, and so many objections in the event of things, is so entangled in difficult and contradictory circumstances, hath in it parts so opposite to each other, and so inconsistent with the present condition of the man, or some secret design of his, that those little pleasures, which are its fucus and pretence, are less perceived and least enjoyed, while they begin in fantastic semblances, and rise up in smoke, vain and hurtful, and end in dissatisfaction.

6. But it is considerable, that God, and the sinner, and the devil, all join in increasing the difficulty and trouble of sin; upon contrary designs, indeed, but all co-operate to the verification of this discourse. For God, by his restraining grace, and the checks of a tender conscience, and the bands of public honesty, and the sense of honour and reputation, and the customs of nations, and the severities of laws, makes that, in most men, the choice of vice is imperfect, dubious, and troublesome, and the pleasures abated, and the apprehensions various, and in differing degrees; and men act their crimes, while they are disputing against them, and the balance is cast by a few grains, and scruples vex and disquiet the

possession; and the difference is perceived to be so little, that inconsideration and inadvertency is the greatest means to determine many men to the entertainment of a sin. And this God does, with a design to lessen our choice, and to disabuse our persuasions from arguments and weak pretences of vice, and to invite us to the trials of virtue, when we see its enemy giving us so ill conditions. And yet the sinner himself makes the business of sin greater; for its nature is so loathsome, and its pleasure so little, and its promises so unperformed, that when it lies open, easy and apt to be discerned, there is no argument in it ready to invite us; and men hate a vice, which is every day offered and prostitute; and when they seek for pleasure, unless difficulty presents it, as there is nothing in it really to persuade a choice, so there is nothing strong or witty enough to abuse a man. And to this purpose, (amongst some others, which are malicious and crafty,) the devil gives assistance, knowing that men despise what is cheap and common, and suspect a latent excellency to be in difficult and forbidden objects: and, therefore, the devil sometimes crosses an opportunity of sin, knowing that the desire is the iniquity, and does his work sufficiently; and yet the crossing the desire, by impeding the act, heightens the appetite, and makes it more violent and impatient. But by all these means, sin is made more troublesome than the pleasures of the temptation can account for: and it will be a strange imprudence to leave virtue, upon pretence of its difficulty, when, for that very reason, we the rather entertain the instances of sin, despising a cheap sin and a costly virtue; choosing to walk through the brambles of a desert, rather than to climb the fruit-trees of paradise.

7. Thirdly: Virtue conduces infinitely to the content of our lives, to secure felicities, and political satisfactions[1]; and vice does the quite contrary. For the blessings of this life are these, that make it happy; peace and quietness; content and satisfaction of desires; riches; love of friends and neighbours; honour and reputation abroad; a healthful body, and a long life. This last is a distinct consideration, but the other are proper to this title. For the first, it is certain, peace was so designed by the holy Jesus, that he framed all his laws in

[1] Ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἐστιν ἀσταβὶς καὶ σύμφορον. — *Arrian.*

compliance to that design. He that returns good for evil, a soft answer to the asperity of his enemy, kindness to injuries, lessens the contention always, and sometimes gets a friend; and when he does not, he shames his enemy. Every little accident in a family, to peevish and angry persons[m], is the matter of a quarrel; and every quarrel discomposes the peace of the house, and sets it on fire; and no man can tell how far that may burn; it may be to a dissolution of the whole fabric. But whosoever obeys the laws of Jesus, bears with the infirmities of his relatives and society, seeks with sweetness to remedy what is ill, and to prevent what it may produce; and throws water upon a spark, and lives sweetly with his wife, affectionately with his children, providently and discreetly with his servants; and they all love the *major-domo*, and look upon him as their parent, their guardian, their friend, their patron, their *proveditore*. But look upon a person angry, peaceless, and disturbed; when he enters upon his threshold, it gives an alarm to his house, and puts them to flight, or upon their defence; and the wife reckons the joy of her day is done, when he returns; and the children inquire into their father's age, and think his life tedious; and the servants curse privately, and do their service as slaves do, only when they dare not do otherwise; and they serve him as they serve a lion, they obey his strength, and fear his cruelty, and despise his manners, and hate his person. No man enjoys content in his family, but he that is peaceful and charitable, just and loving, forbearing and forgiving, careful and provident. He that is not so, his house may be his castle, but it is manned by enemies; his "house is built," not "upon the sand," but upon the waves, and upon a tempest: the foundation is uncertain, but his ruin is not so.

8. And if we extend the relations of the man beyond his own walls, he that does his duty to his neighbour, that is, all offices of kindness, gentleness, and humanity, nothing of injury and affront, is certain never to meet with a wrong so great, as is the inconvenience of a law-suit, or the contention of neighbours, and all the consequent dangers and inconvenience. Kindness will create and invite kindness; an in-

[m] Malignum hunc esse hominem forsan credas.
Ego esse miserum credo, cui placet nemo. — *Mart. Ep.*

jury provokes an injury. And since "the love of neighbours" is one of those beauties which Solomon did admire, and that this beauty is within the combination of precious things, which adorn and reward a peaceable, charitable disposition; he that is in love with spiritual excellences, with intellectual rectitudes, with peace, and with blessings of society, knows they grow amongst the rose-bushes of virtue, and holy obedience to the laws of Jesus. And "for a good man some will even dare to die;" and a sweet and charitable disposition is received with fondness, and all the endearments of the neighbourhood. He that observes how many families are ruined by contention[n], and how many spirits are broken by the care, and contumely, and fear, and spite, which are entertained, as advocates to promote a suit of law, will soon confess, that a great loss, and peaceable quitting of a considerable interest, is a purchase and a gain, in respect of a long suit and a vexatious quarrel. And still, if the proportion rises higher, the reason swells, and grows more necessary and determinate. For if we would live according to the discipline of the Christian religion, one of the great plagues which vex the world, would be no more. That there should be no wars, was one of the designs of Christianity; and the living according to that institution, which is able to prevent all wars, and to establish an universal and eternal peace, when it is obeyed, is the using an infallible instrument toward that part of our political happiness, which consists in peace. This world would be an image of heaven, if all men were charitable, peaceable, just, and loving. To this excellency all those precepts of Christ, which consist in forbearance and forgiveness, do co-operate.

9. But the next instance of the reward of holy obedience, and conformity to Christ's laws, is itself a duty, and needs no more but a mere repetition of it. We must be content[o] in every state; and because Christianity teaches us this lesson, it teaches us to be happy: for nothing from without can

[n] Ὅπου γὰρ ζῆλος καὶ ἐρίθεια, ἐκεῖ ἀκαταστασία, καὶ πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα.— *Jac.* iii. 10.

[o] Αὐτάρκεια τοῦ βίου φιλοσοφία αὐτοδίδακτος.— *Pol.*

Vitio vertunt quia multa egeo; at ego illis, quià nequeunt egere.—*M. Cato apud Aul. Gell.* lib. xiii. c. 22.

Neque mala vel bona, quæ vulgus putat: multos qui conflictari adversis videantur, beatos, ac plerosque, quamquam magnas per opes, miserrimos;

make us miserable, unless we join our own consents to it, and apprehend it such, and entertain it in our sad and melancholic retirements. A prison is but a retirement, and opportunity of serious thoughts, to a person whose spirit is confined, and apt to sit still, and desires no enlargement beyond the cancels of the body, till the state of separation calls it forth into a fair liberty. But every retirement is a prison to a loose and wandering fancy, for whose wildness no precepts are restraint, no band of duty is confinement, who, when he hath broken the first hedge of duty, can never after endure any enclosure so much as in a symbol. But this precept is so necessary, that it is not more a duty than a rule of prudence, and in many accidents of our lives it is the only cure of sadness: for it is certain, that no providence less than Divine can prevent evil and cross accidents; but that is an excellent remedy to the evil, that receives the accident within its power, and takes out the sting, paring the nails, and drawing the teeth of the wild beast, that it may be tame, or harmless and medicinal. For all content consists in the proportion of the object to the appetite: and because external accidents are not in our power, and it were nothing excellent that things happened to us according to our first desires, God hath, by his grace, put it into our own power to make the happiness, by making our desires descend to the event, and comply with the chance, and combine with all the issues of Divine providence. And then we are noble persons, when we borrow not our content from things below us, but make our satisfactions from within[P]. And it may be considered,

si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerent, hi prosperâ inconsultè utantur.—*Tacit. An.* lib. vi.

——— Si celeres (fortuna) quatit
Pennas, resigno quæ dedit, et meâ
Virtute me involvo: probamque
Pauperiem sine dote quæro. — *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 29.

Κάλλιστόν ἐστι τοὔνδικον πεφυκέναι·
Λῷστον δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἄνοσον· ἥδιστον δ' ὅτῳ
Πάρεστι λῆψις ὧν ἐρᾷ καθ' ἡμέραν. — *Sophocl. Creüsâ.*

[P] Non enim gazæ, neque consularis
Summovet lictor miseros tumultus
Mentis, et curas laqueata circum
Tecta volantes. *Hor.* lib. ii. *Od.* 16.

Quemcunque fortem videris, miserum neges. — *Senec. Trag.*

Τίκτουσι γάρ τοι καὶ νόσους δυσθυμίαι. — *Sophocl. Tereus.*

Μὴ σύ γε ἄυξανε τὴν εἱμαρμένην. — *Zoroast.*

that every little care may disquiet us, and may increase itself by reflection upon its own acts; and every discontent may discompose our spirits, and put an edge, and make afflictions poignant, but cannot take off one from us, but makes every one to be two. But content removes not the accident, but complies with it; it takes away the sharpness and displeasure of it, and, by stooping down, makes the lowest equal, proportionable, and commensurate. Impatience makes an ague to be a fever, and every fever to be a calenture, and that calenture may expire in madness: but a quiet spirit is a great disposition to health, and, for the present, does alleviate the sickness. And this also is notorious in the instance of covetousness. "The love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have pierced themselves with many sorrows[q]." Vice makes poor, and does ill endure it.

10. For he that, in the school of Christ, hath learned to determine his desires, when his needs are served, and to judge of his needs by the proportions of nature, hath nothing wanting towards riches. Virtue makes poverty become rich; and no riches can satisfy a covetous mind, or rescue him from the affliction of the worst kind of poverty[r]. He only wants, that is not satisfied. And there is great infelicity in a family, where poverty dwells with discontent: there the husband and wife quarrel for want of a full table and a rich

[q] 1 Tim. vi. 10.

[r] Cùm perjura patris fides
Consortem socium fallat et hospitem,
Indignoque pecuniam
Hæredi properet. Scilicet improbæ
Crescunt divitiæ; tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei. — *Horat.* lib. iii. *Od.* 24.
——— Vel dic, quid referat intra
Naturæ fines viventi, jugera centum an
Mille aret ———————
Ut, tibi si sit opus liquidi non ampliùs urnâ,
Vel cyatho, et dicas; Magno de flumine mallem,
Quàm ex hoc fonticulo tantundem sumere. Eo fit,
Plenior ut si quos delectet copia justo,
Cum ripa simul avulsos ferat Aufidus acer:
At qui tantulo eget quanto est opus, is neque limo
Turbatam haurit aquam, neque vitam amittit in undis.
Horat. Serm. lib. i. *Sat.* 1.
——— Πενιᾶς οὐδὲν ἀνθρώπους ἔφυ
Κέρδος λαβεῖν ἄμεινον, οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ. — *Soph. Elect.*

wardrobe; and their love, that was built upon false arches, sinks, when such temporary supporters are removed; they are like two millstones, which set the mill on fire when they want corn: and then their combinations and society were unions of lust, or not supported with religious love. But we may easily suppose St. Joseph and the holy Virgin-mother in Egypt poor as hunger, forsaken as banishment, disconsolate as strangers; and yet their present lot gave them no affliction, because the angel fed them with a necessary hospitality, and their desires were no larger than their tables, and their eyes looked only upwards, and they were careless of the future, and careful of their duty, and so made their life pleasant by the measures and discourses of Divine philosophy. When Elisha stretched himself upon the body of the child, and laid hands to hands, and applied mouth to mouth, and so shrunk himself into the posture of commensuration with the child, he brought life into the dead trunk: and so may we, by applying our spirits to the proportions of a narrow fortune, bring life and vivacity into our dead and lost condition, and make it live till it grows bigger, or else returns to health and salutary uses.

11. And besides this philosophical extraction of gold from stones, and riches from the dungeon of poverty, a holy life does most probably procure such a proportion of riches, which can be useful to us, or consistent with our felicity. For besides that the holy Jesus hath promised all things, which "our heavenly Father knows we need," (provided we do our duty,) and that we find great securities and rest from care, when we have once cast our cares upon God, and placed our hopes in his bosom; besides all this, the temperance, sobriety, and prudence of a Christian is a great income, and, by not despising it, a small revenue combines its parts, till it grows to a heap big enough for the emissions of charity, and all the offices of justice, and the supplies of all necessities: whilst vice is unwary, prodigal, and indiscreet, throwing away great revenues, as tributes to intemperance and vanity, and suffering dissolution and forfeiture of estates, as a punishment and curse. Some sins are direct improvidence and ill husbandry. I reckon in this number intemperance, lust, litigiousness, ambition, bribery, prodigality, gaming, pride,

sacrilege, which is the greatest spender of them all, and makes a fair estate evaporate like camphire, turning it into nothing, no man knows which way[s]. But what the Roman gave as an estimate of a rich man, saying, "He that can maintain an army, is rich," was but a short account; for he that can maintain an army, may be beggared by one vice, and it is a vast revenue, that will pay the debt-books of intemperance or lust.

12. To these if we add that virtue is honourable[t], and a great advantage to a fair reputation, that it is praised[u] by them that love it not, that it is honoured by the followers and family of vice, that it forces glory out of shame, honour from contempt, that it reconciles men to the fountain of honour, the Almighty God, who will "honour them that honour him;" there are but a few more excellencies in the world to make up the rosary of temporal felicity. And it is so certain that religion serves even our temporal ends, that no great end of state can well be served without it; not ambition, not desires of wealth, not any great design, but religion must be made its usher or support[x]. If a new opinion be commenced, and the author would make a sect, and draw disciples after him, at least he must be thought to be religious; which is a demonstration how great an instrument of reputation piety and religion is: and if the pretence will do us good offices amongst men, the reality will do the same, besides the advantages which we shall receive from the Divine benediction. The "power of godliness" will certainly do more than the "form" alone. And it is most notorious in the affairs of the clergy, whose lot it hath been to fall from great riches to poverty, when their wealth made them less curious of their duty; but when humility, and

[s] Aleam exercent tantâ lucrandi perdendive temeritate, ut cùm omnia defecerunt, novissimo jactu de libertate et de corpore contendant.—*Tacit. de Mor. Germ.*

[t] Virtus, repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus;
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ.—*Horat.* lib. iii. *Od.* 2.

[u] —— virtus laudatur, et alget.—*Juven.*

[x] Præcipuam imperatoriæ majestatis curam esse prospicimus, religionis indaginem; cujus si cultum retinere potuerimus, iter prosperitatis humanis aperitur inceptis.—*Theod. et Valent. in Cod. Theod.*

chastity, and exemplary sanctity, have been the enamel of their holy order; the people, like the Galatians, would pull out their own eyes to do them benefit. And indeed God hath singularly blessed [y] such instruments, to the being the only remedies to repair the breaches made by sacrilege and irreligion. But certain it is, no man was ever honoured for that which was esteemed vicious. Vice hath got money and a curse many times, and vice hath adhered to the instruments and purchases of honour: but, among all nations whatsoever, those called honourable put on the face and pretence of virtue. But I choose to instance in the proper cognizance of a Christian, humility, which seems contradictory to the purposes and reception of honour; and yet, in the world, nothing is a more certain means to purchase it. Do not all the world hate a proud man? And, therefore, what is contrary to humility, is also contradictory to honour and reputation. And when the apostle had given command, that "in giving honour, we should one go before another," he laid the foundation of praises, and panegyrics, and triumphs. And as humility is secure against affronts and tempests of despite, because it is below them; so when, by employment, or any other issue of Divine Providence, it is drawn from its sheath and secrecy, it shines clear and bright as the purest and most polished metals. Humility is like a tree, whose root, when it sets deepest in the earth, rises higher, and spreads fairer, and stands surer, and lasts longer; every step of its descent is like a rib of iron, combining its parts in unions indissoluble, and placing it in the chambers of security. No wise man ever lost any thing by cession; but he receives the hostility of violent persons into his embraces: like a stone into a lap of wool, it rests and sits down soft and innocently; but a stone falling upon a stone makes a collision, and extracts fire, and finds no rest: and just so are two proud persons, despised by each other, contemned by all, living in perpetual dissonancies, always fighting against affronts, jealous of every person, disturbed by every accident, a perpetual storm within, and daily hissings from without.

13. Fourthly: Holiness and obedience is an excellent preservative of life, and makes it long and healthful. In

[y] Dedit enim providentia hominibus munus, ut honesta magis juvarent.—*Quintil.* lib. i. c. 12.

order to which discourse, because it is new, material, and argumentative, apt to persuade men, who prefer life before all their other interests, I consider many things. First: In the Old Testament, a long and a prosperous life were the great promises of the covenant; their hopes were built upon it, and that was made the support of all their duty. "If thou wilt diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, I will put none of the diseases upon thee, which I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee[z]." And more particularly yet, that we may not think piety to be security only against the plagues of Egypt, God makes his promise more indefinite and unconfined: "Ye shall serve the Lord your God, and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee, and will fulfil the number of thy days[a];" that is, the period of nature shall be the period of thy person; thou shalt live long, and die in a seasonable and ripe age. And this promise was so verified by a long experience, that, by David's time, it grew up to a rule: "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips, that they speak no guile[b]." And the same argument was pressed by Solomon, who was an excellent philosopher, and well skilled in the natural and accidental means of preservation of our lives: "Fear the Lord, and depart from evil; and it shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones[c]." "Length of days is in the right hand of wisdom:" for "she is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her[d]." Meaning, that the tree of life and immortality, which God had planted in paradise, and which, if man had stood, he should have tasted, and have lived for ever, the fruit of that tree is offered upon the same conditions; if we will keep the commandments of God, our obedience, like the tree of life, shall consign us to immortality hereafter, by a long and a healthful life here. And therefore, although in Moses' time the days of man had been shortened, till they came to "threescore years and ten, or fourscore years, and then their strength is but labour and sorrow[e];" (for Moses was author of that psalm;) yet, to show the great privilege of those persons whose piety was great, Moses himself attained to

[z] Exod. xv. 26. [a] Exod. xxiii. 25, 26. [b] Psal. xxxiv. 12, 13.
[c] Prov. iii. 7, 8. [d] Ver. 16, 18. [e] Psal. xc. 10.

one hundred and twenty years, which was almost double to the ordinary and determined period. But Enoch and Elias never died, and became great examples to us, that a spotless and holy life might possibly have been immortal.

14. I shall add no more examples, but one great conjugation of precedent observed by the Jewish writers; who tell us, that in the second temple there were three hundred high priests, (I suppose they set down a certain number for an uncertain, and by three hundred they mean very many,) and yet that temple lasted but four hundred and twenty years; the reason of this so rapid and violent abscission of their priests being their great and scandalous impieties: and yet, in the first temple, whose abode was, within ten years, as long as the second, there was a succession but of eighteen high priests; for they being generally very pious, and the preservers of their rites and religion, against the schism of Jeroboam, and the defection of Israel, and the idolatry and irreligion of many of the kings of Judah, God took delight to reward it with a long and honourable old age. And Balaam knew well enough what he said, when, in his ecstasy and prophetic rapture, he made his prayer to God: "Let my soul die the death of the righteous[f]." It was not a prayer that his soul might be saved, or that he might repent at last; for repentance and immortality were revelations of a later date: but he, in his prophetic ecstasy, seeing what God had purposed to the Moabites, and what blessings he had reserved for Israel, prays that he might not die, as the Moabites were like to die, with an untimely death, by the sword of their enemies, dispossessed of their country, spoiled of their goods, in the period and last hour of their nation: but let my soul die the death of the just, the death designed for the faithful Israelites; such a death which God promised to Abraham, that he should return to his fathers in peace, and in a good old age. For the death[g] of the righteous is like the descending of ripe and wholesome fruits from a pleasant and

[f] Num. xxiii. 10.

[g] Μηδέ μοι ἄκλαυστος θάνατος μέλοι, ἀλλὰ φίλοισι
Καλλείποιμι θανὼν ἄλγεα καὶ στοναχάς.—*Solon.*

Cicero, in Tuscul. 1. sic reddit:

Mors mea non careat lacrymis: linquamus amicis
Mœrorem, ut celebrent funera cum gemitu.

florid tree; our senses entire, our limbs unbroken, without horrid tortures, after provision made for our children, with a blessing entailed upon posterity, in the presence of our friends, our dearest relative closing up our eyes, and binding our feet, leaving a good name behind us. O let my soul die such a death! for this, in whole or in part, according as God sees it good, is the manner that the righteous die. And this was Balaam's prayer. And this was the state and condition in the Old Testament.

15. In the Gospel the case is nothing altered. For, besides that those austerities, rigours, and mortifications, which are in the Gospel advised or commanded respectively, are more salutary, or of less corporal inconvenience, than a vicious life of intemperance, or lust, or carefulness, or tyrant covetousness; there is no accident or change, to the sufferance of which the Gospel hath engaged us, but in the very thing our life is carefully provided for, either in kind, or by a gainful exchange: "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it, and he that will save his life, shall lose it[h]." And although God, who promised long life to them that obey, did not promise that himself would never call for our life, borrowing it of us, and repaying it in a glorious and advantageous exchange; yet this very promise of giving us a better life in exchange for this, when we exposed it in martyrdom, does confirm our title to this, this being the instrument of permutation with the other: for God, obliging himself to give us another in exchange for this, when, in cases extraordinary, he calls for this, says plainly, that this is our present right by grace, and the title of the Divine promises. But the promises are clear. For St. Paul calls children to the observation of the fifth commandment, by the same argument, which God used in the first promulgation of it. "Honour thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long upon the earth[i]." For although the Gospel be built upon better promises than the law, yet it hath the same too, not as its foundation, but as appendances and adjuncts of grace, and supplies of need. "Godliness[k] hath the promise

[h] Matt. x. 39. [i] Ephes. vi. 2, 3.

[k] —— οὐ γὰρ ἐυσέβεια συνθήσκει βροτοῖς·
Κἂν ζῶσι, κἂν θάνωσιν, οὐκ ἀπόλλυται. — *Sophocl. Philoct.*

of this life, as well as of the life that is to come[l]." That is plain. And although Christ revealed his Father's mercies to us, in new expresses and great abundance; yet he took nothing from the world which ever did, in any sense, invite piety, or endear obedience, or co-operate towards felicity. And, therefore, the promises which were made of old, are also presupposed in the new, and mentioned by intimation and implication within the greater. When our blessed Saviour, in seven of the eight beatitudes, had instanced in new promises and rewards, as "heaven, seeing of God, life eternal[m];" in one of them, to which heaven is as certainly consequent as to any of the rest, he did choose to instance in a temporal blessing, and in the very words of the Old Testament[n]; to show, that that part of the old covenant, which concerns morality, and the rewards of obedience, remains firm, and included within the conditions of the Gospel.

16. To this purpose is that saying of our blessed Saviour: "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God[o]:" meaning, that besides natural means, ordained for the preservation of our lives, there are means supernatural and divine. God's blessing does as much as bread: nay, it is "every word proceeding out of the mouth of God;" that is, every precept and commandment of God is so for our good, that it is intended as food and physic to us, a means to make us live long. And therefore God hath done in this as in other graces and issues evangelical, which he purposed to continue in his church for ever: he first gave it in miraculous and extraordinary manner, and then gave it by way of perpetual ministry. The Holy Ghost appeared at first like a prodigy, and with miracle; he descended in visible representments, expressing himself in revelations and powers extraordinary: but it being a promise intended to descend upon all ages of the church, there was appointed a perpetual ministry for its conveyance; and still, though without a sign or miraculous representment, it is ministered in confirmation by imposition of the bishop's hands. And thus also, health and long life, which, by way of ordinary benediction, is consequent to piety, faith, and

[l] 1 Tim. iv. 8.
[m] Psal. xxxvii. 11.
[n] Matt. v. 3, &c. Ver. 5.
[o] Matt. iv. 4. Deut. viii. 3.

obedience evangelical, was at first given in a miraculous manner; that so the ordinary effects, being at first confirmed by miraculous and extraordinary instances and manners of operation, might, for ever after, be confidently expected, without any dubitation, since it was in the same manner consigned, by which all the whole religion was, by a voice from heaven, and a verification of miracles, and extraordinary supernatural effects. That the gift of healing, and preservation and restitution of life, was at first miraculous, needs no particular probation. All the story of the Gospel is one entire argument to prove it: and amongst the fruits of the Spirit, St. Paul reckons "gifts of healing, and government, and helps," or exterior assistances and advantages; to represent, that it was intended the life of Christian people should be happy and healthful for ever. Now, that this grace also descended afterwards in an ordinary ministry, is recorded by St. James: "Is any man sick amongst you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord[p];" that was then the ceremony, and the blessing and effect is still; for "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." For it is observable, that the blessing of healing and recovery is not appendant to the annealing, but to the prayer, of the church; to manifest, that the ceremony went with the first miraculous and extraordinary manner; yet that there was an ordinary ministry appointed for the daily conveyance of the blessing: the faithful prayers and offices of holy priests shall obtain life and health to such persons who are receptive of it, and in spiritual and apt dispositions. And when we see, by a continual flux of extraordinary benediction, that even some Christian princes are instruments of the Spirit, not only in the government, but in the gifts of healing too, as a reward for their promoting the just interests of Christianity; we may acknowledge ourselves convinced, that a holy life, in the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ, may be of great advantage for our health and life, by that instance to entertain our present desires, and to establish our hopes of life eternal[q].

[p] Jam. v. 14, 15.

[q] Futuræ nobis resurrectionis virorem in te Dominus ostendit, ut peccati sciamus esse, quòd cæteri adhuc viventes præmoriuntur in carne; justitiæ, quòd tu adolescentiam in aliena ætate mentiris. — *S. Hieron. Paulo Concordiensi Vegeto et Pio Seni*, lib. i. c. 8.

17. For I consider, that the fear of God is therefore the best antidote in the world against sickness and death, because it is the direct enemy to sin, which brought in sickness and death; and besides this, that God, by spiritual means, should produce alterations natural, is not hard to be understood by a Christian philosopher, take him in either of the two capacities. 2. For there is a rule of proportion, and analogy of effects, that, if sin destroys not only the soul but the body also, then may piety preserve both, and that much rather: for "if sin," that is, the effects and consequents of sin, "hath abounded, then shall grace superabound[r];" that is, Christ hath done us more benefit than the fall of Adam hath done us injury; and, therefore, the effects of sin are not greater upon the body, than either are to be restored or prevented by a pious life. 3. There is so near a conjunction between soul and body, that it is no wonder, if God, meaning to glorify both by the means of a spiritual life, suffers spirit and matter to communicate in effects and mutual impresses. Thus the waters of baptism purify the soul; and the holy eucharist, not the symbolical, but the mysterious and spiritual part of it, makes the body also partaker of the death of Christ and a holy union. The flames of hell, whatsoever they are, torment accursed souls; and the stings of conscience vex and disquiet the body. 4. And if we consider, that, in the glories of heaven, when we shall live a life purely spiritual, our bodies also are so clarified and made spiritual, that they also become immortal; that state of glory being nothing else but a perfection of the state of grace, it is not unimaginable, but that the soul may have some proportion of the same operation upon the body, as to conduce to its prolongation, as to an antepast of immortality. 5. For, since the body hath all its life from its conjunction with the soul, why not also the perfection of life, according to its present capacity, that is, health and duration, from the perfection of the soul, I mean, from the ornaments of grace? And as the blessedness of the soul (saith the philosopher) consists in the speculation of honest and just things; so the perfection of the body, and of the whole man, consists in the practice, the exercise, and operations of virtue.

[r] Rom. v. 20.

18. But this problem in Christian philosophy is yet more intelligible, and will be reduced to certain experience, if we consider good life in union and concretion with particular, material, and circumstantiate actions of piety: for these have great powers and influences, even in nature, to restore health and preserve our lives. Witness the sweet sleeps of temperate persons, and their constant appetite; which Timotheus, the son of Conon, observed, when he dieted in Plato's academy with severe and moderated diet: "They that sup with Plato, are well the next day[s]." Witness the symmetry of passions in meek men, their freedom from the violence of enraged and passionate indispositions, the admirable harmony and sweetness of content, which dwells in the retirements of a holy conscience: to which if we add those joys, which they only understand truly, who feel them inwardly, the joys of the Holy Ghost, the content and joys which are attending upon the lives of holy persons, are most likely to make them long and healthful. "For now we live," saith St. Paul, "if ye stand fast in the Lord[t]." It would prolong St. Paul's life to see his ghostly children persevere in holiness; and if we understood the joys of it, it would do much greater advantage to ourselves. But if we consider a spiritual life abstractedly, and in itself, piety produces our life, not by a natural efficiency, but by Divine benediction. God gives a healthy and a long life, as a reward and blessing to crown our piety, even before the sons of men: "For such as be blessed of him, shall inherit the earth; but they that be cursed of him, shall be cut off[u]." So that this whole matter is principally to be referred to the act of God, either by ways of nature, or by instruments of special providence, rewarding piety with a long life. And we shall more fully apprehend this, if, upon the grounds of Scripture, reason, and experience, we weigh the contrary. "Wickedness" is the way to "shorten our days[x]."

19. Sin brought death in first; and yet man lived almost a thousand years. But he sinned more, and then death came nearer to him: for when all the world was first drowned in wickedness, and then in water, God cut him shorter by one half, and five hundred years was his ordinary period. And

[s] Ὅτι ὀι παρὰ Πλάτωνι δειπνήσαντες καὶ τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ καλῶς γίνονται. Μήτε ἰσχὺν ἄλλο τι ἡγοῦνται, ἢ τὸ τὰ δέοντα πράττειν. — *De Atheniensibus dictum apud Thucyd.*

[t] 1 Thess. iii. 8. [u] Psal. xxxvii. 22. [x] Prov. x. 27.

man sinned still, and had strange imaginations, and built towers in the air; and then, about Peleg's time, God cut him shorter by one half yet, two hundred and odd years was his determination. And yet the generations of the world returned not unanimously to God; and God cut him off another half yet, and reduced him to one hundred and twenty years. And, by Moses' time, one half of the final remanent portion was pared away, reducing him to threescore years and ten; so that, unless it be by special dispensation, men live not beyond that term, or thereabout. But if God had gone on still in the same method, and shortened our days as we multiplied our sins, we should have been but as an ephemeron, man should have lived the life of a fly or a gourd; the morning should have seen his birth, his life have been the term of a day, and the evening must have provided him of a shroud. But God, seeing "man's thoughts were only evil continually," he was resolved no longer so to strive with him, nor destroy the kind, but punish individuals only, and single persons; and if they sinned, or if they did obey, regularly their life should be proportionable. This God set down for his rule: "Evil shall slay the wicked person[y]:" and, "He that keepeth the commandments, keepeth his own soul; but he that despiseth his own ways, shall die[z]."

20. But that we may speak more exactly in this problem, we must observe, that, in Scripture, three general causes of natural death are assigned, nature, providence, and chance. By these three I only mean the several manners of Divine influence and operation. For God only predetermines; and what is changed in the following events by Divine permission, to this God and man, in their several manners, do co-operate. The saying of David concerning Saul, with admirable philosophy describes the three ways of ending man's life. "David said furthermore, As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle, and perish[a]." The first is special providence. The second means the term of nature. The third is that which, in our want of words, we call chance or accident, but is, in effect, nothing else but another manner of the Divine providence. That, in all these, sin does interrupt and retrench our lives, is the undertaking of the following periods.

[y] Psal. xxxiv. 21. [z] Prov. xix. 16. [a] 1 Sam. xxvi. 10.

21. First: In nature, sin is a cause of dyscrasies and distempers, making our bodies healthless, and our days few[b]. For although God hath prefixed a period to nature, by an universal and antecedent determination, and that naturally every man that lives temperately, and by no supervening accident is interrupted, shall arrive thither; yet, because the greatest part of our lives is governed by will and understanding, and there are temptations to intemperance and to violations of our health, the period of nature is so distinct a thing from the period of our person, that few men attain to that, which God had fixed by his first law and preceding purpose, but end their days with folly, and in a period which God appointed them with anger, and a determination secondary, consequent, and accidental. And therefore, says David, "Health is far from the ungodly, for they regard not thy statutes." And to this purpose is that saying of Abenezra[c]: "He that is united to God, the fountain of life, his soul, being improved by grace, communicates to the body an establishment of its radical moisture and natural heat, to make it more healthful, that so it may be more instrumental to the spiritual operations and productions of the soul, and itself be preserved in perfect constitution." Now, how this blessing is contradicted by the impious life of a wicked person, is easy to be understood, if we consider, that from drunken surfeits[d] come dissolution of members, headachs,

[b] Audax omnia perpeti
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas.
Post ignem æthereâ domo
Subductum, macies et nova febrium
Terris incubuit cohors;
Semotique priùs tarda necessitas
Lethi corripuit gradum.—*Horat.* lib. i. *Carm. Od.* 3.

[c] In Exod. xxiii. Quicunque unitur Deo, ipsi corroboratur calidum et humidum per vim animæ, et tunc vivit homo ultra limitatum tempus.

[d] Eubulus apud Athenæum, lib. vii. c. 1. introducit Bacchum loquentem in hunc modum:

Tres tantùm sanis ego crateras misceo:
Unum valetudinis, et hunc primum Œdipum;
Secundum amoris, et soporis tertium:
Quo, qui sapere solent, eunt hausto domum.
Nam quartus est haud ampliùs crater meus,
Sed contumeliæ; velut huic proximus
Clamoris, &c.

Nam plurimum vini inditum in vas parvulum
Sternit sine omni, quem replet, negotio.

apoplexies, dangerous falls, fracture of bones, drenchings and dilution of the brain, inflammation of the liver, crudities of the stomach, and thousands more, which Solomon sums up in general terms: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath redness of eyes? they that tarry long at the wine[e]." I shall not need to instance, in the sad and uncleanly consequents of lust, the wounds and accidental deaths which are occasioned by jealousies, by vanity, by peevishness, vain reputation, and animosities, by melancholy, and the despair of evil consciences; and yet these are abundant argument, that when God so permits a man to run his course of nature, that himself does not intervene by an extraordinary influence, or any special acts of providence, but only gives his ordinary assistance to natural causes, a very great part of men make their natural period shorter, and by sin make their days miserable and few.

22. Secondly: Oftentimes providence intervenes, and makes the way shorter; God, for the iniquity of man, not suffering nature to take her course, but stopping her in the midst of her journey. Against this David prayed: "O my God, cut me not off in the midst of my days[f]." But in this there is some variety. For God does it sometimes in mercy, sometimes in judgment. "The righteous die, and no man regardeth; not considering, that they are taken away from the evil to come[g]." God takes the righteous man hastily to his crown, lest temptation snatch it from him by interrupting his hopes and sanctity. And this was the case of the old world. For, from Adam to the flood, by the patriarchs were eleven generations; but by Cain's line there were but eight, so that Cain's posterity were longer lived: because God, intending to bring the flood upon the world, took delight to rescue his elect from the dangers of the present impurity, and the future deluge. Abraham lived five years less than his son Isaac, it being (say the doctors of the Jews) intended for mercy to him, that he might not see the iniquity of his grandchild Esau. And this the church, for many ages, hath believed, in the case of baptized infants dying before the use of reason. For, besides other causes in the order of Divine providence, one kind of mercy is done to them too; for

[e] Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. [f] Psal. cii. 24. [g] Isa. lvii. 1.

although their condition be of a lower form, yet it is secured by that timely (shall I call it?) or untimely death. But these are cases extra-regular: ordinarily, and by rule, God hath revealed his purposes of interruption of the lives of sinners to be in anger and judgment; for when men commit any signal and grand impiety, God suffers not nature to take her course, but strikes a stroke with his own hand. To which purpose I think it a remarkable instance, which is reported by Epiphanius[h], that, for 3,332 years, even to the twentieth age, there was not one example of a son that died before his father, but the course of nature was kept, that he who was first born in the descending line, did die first; (I speak of natural death, and therefore Abel cannot be opposed to this observation,) till that Terah, the father of Abraham, taught the people to make images of clay, and worship them; and concerning him it was first remarked, that "Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity[i]:" God, by an unheard-of judgment, and a rare accident, punishing his newly-invented crime. And whenever such intercision of a life happens to a vicious person, let all the world acknowledge it for a judgment; and when any man is guilty of evil habits, or unrepented sins, he may therefore expect it, because it is threatened and designed for the lot and curse of such persons. This is threatened to covetousness, injustice, and oppression. "As a partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not: so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool[k]." The same is threatened to voluptuous persons in the highest caresses of delight; and Christ told a parable with the same design. The rich man said, "Soul, take thy ease; but God answered, O fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee." Zimri and Cozbi were slain in the trophies of their lust; and it was a sad story which was told by Thomas Cantipratanus: Two religious persons, tempted by each other, in the vigour of their youth, in their very first pleasures and opportunities of sin, were both struck dead in their embraces and posture of entertainment. God smote Jeroboam for his usurpation and tyranny, and he died[l],

[h] Lib. i. tom. i. Panar. sect. 6.
[i] Gen. xi. 28.
[k] Jer. xvii. 11.
[l] 2 Chron. xiii. 20.

Saul died for disobedience against God, and asking counsel of a Pythoness[m]. God smote Uzziah with a leprosy for his profaneness[n]; and distressed Ahaz sorely for his sacrilege[o]; and sent a horrid disease upon Jehoram for his idolatry[p]. These instances represent voluptuousness and covetousness, rapine and injustice, idolatry and lust, profaneness and sacrilege, as remarked by the signature of exemplary judgments, to be the means of shortening the days of man; God himself proving the executioner of his own fierce wrath. I instance no more, but in the singular case of Hananiah, the false prophet: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will cut thee from off the face of the earth; this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord[q]." That is the curse and portion of a false prophet, a short life, and a sudden death, of God's own particular and more immediate infliction.

23. And thus also the sentence of the Divine anger went forth upon criminal persons in the New Testament: witness the disease of Herod, Judas's hanging himself, the blindness of Elymas, the sudden death of Ananias and Sapphira, the buffetings with which Satan afflicted the bodies of persons excommunicate. Yea, the blessed sacrament of Christ's body and blood, which is intended for our spiritual life, if it be unworthily received, proves the cause of a natural death: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many are fallen asleep[r]," saith St. Paul to the Corinthian church.

24. Thirdly: But there is yet another manner of ending man's life, by way of chance or contingency; meaning thereby the manner of God's providence, and event of things, which is not produced by the disposition of natural causes, nor yet by any particular and special act of God; but the event which depends upon accidental causes, not so certain and regular as nature, not so conclusive and determined as the acts of decretory providence, but comes, by disposition of causes irregular, to events rare and accidental. This David expresses by "entering into battle:" and in this, as in the other, we must separate cases extraordinary and rare from the ordinary and common. Extra-regularly, and upon extra-

[m] 1 Chron. x. 13. [n] 2 Chron. xxvi. 19. [o] 2 Kings, xvi.
[p] 2 Chron. xxi. 18. [q] Jer. xxviii. 16. [r] 1 Cor. xi. 30.

ordinary reasons and permissions, we find that holy persons have miscarried in battle. So the Israelites fell before Benjamin; and Jonathan, and Uriah, and many of the Lord's champions, fighting against the Philistines: but in these deaths, as God served other ends of providence, so he kept to the good men that fell, all the mercies of the promise, by giving them a greater blessing of event and compensation. In the more ordinary course of Divine dispensation, they that prevaricate the laws of God, are put out of protection; God withdraws his special providence, or their tutelar angel, and leaves them exposed to the influences of heaven, to the power of a constellation, to the accidents of humanity, to the chances of a battle, which are so many and various, that it is ten thousand to one, a man in that case never escapes; and, in such variety of contingencies, there is no probable way to assure our safety, but by a holy life, to endear the providence of God to be our guardian. It was a remarkable saying of Deborah: "The stars fought in their courses," or "in their orbs, against Sisera[s]." Sisera fought, when there was an evil aspect, or malignant influence of heaven, upon him. For even the smallest thing that is in opposition to us, is enough to turn the chance of a battle; that although it be necessary, for defence of the godly, that a special providence should intervene, yet, to confound the impious, no special act is requisite. If God exposes them to the ill aspect of a planet, or any other casualty, their days are interrupted, and they die. And this is the meaning of the prophet Jeremiah[t]: "Be not ye dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them[u];" meaning, that God will overrule all inferior causes for the safety of his servants; but the wicked shall be exposed to chance and human accidents; and the signs of heaven, which of themselves do but signify, or, at most, but dispose and incline towards events, shall be enough to actuate and consummate their ruin. And this is

[s] Judg. v. 20. [t] Jer. x. 2.

[u] Gentes signa dierum et numerum mensis aut hebdomadæ cum metu superstitioso observârunt. Quarta luna infausta reputabatur, unde proverbium *ἐν τετράδι γεγεννῆσθαι*. Hujusmodi dies Græci *ἀποφράδας* vocant; Latini *nefastos*. Hesiodus quintas omnino suspectas habet:

Πέμπτας δ' ἐξαλέασθαι, ἐπεὶ χαλεπαί τε καὶ αἰναί
Ἐν πέμπτῃ γάρ φασιν Ἐρινύας ἀμφιπολεύειν.

the meaning of that proverb of the Jews, "Israel hath no planet[x]:" which they expounded to mean, if they observe the law, the planets shall not hurt them, God will overrule all their influences; but, if they prevaricate and rebel, the least star in the firmament of heaven shall bid them battle, and overthrow them. A stone shall lie in a wicked man's way, and God shall so expose him to it, leaving him so unguarded and defenceless, that he shall stumble at it, and fall, and break a bone, and that shall produce a fever, and the fever shall end his days. For not only every creature, when it is set on by God, can prove a ruin; but if we be not, by the providence of God, defended against it, we cannot behold the least atom in the sun, without danger of losing an eye, nor eat a grape without fear of choking, nor sneeze without breaking of a vein. And Arius, going to the ground, purged his entrails forth, and fell down unto the earth, and died. Such, and so miserable, is the great insecurity of a sinner. And of this Job had an excellent meditation: "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?" This is he that "dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet[y]."

25. I sum up this discourse with an observation, that is made concerning the family of Eli, upon which, for the remissness of discipline on the father's part, and for the impiety and profaneness of his sons, God sent his curse: "All the increase of their house shall die in the flower of their age[z]." According to that sad malediction, it happened for many generations; the heir of the family died as soon as he begat a son to succeed him: till the family, being wearied by so long a curse, by the counsel of Rabbi Johanan Ben Zachary, betook themselves universally to a sedulous and

[x] Non est planeta Israeli.

Μία φυλακὴ ἡ εὐσέβεια· εὐσεβοῦς γὰρ ἀνθρώπου οὐ δαίμων κακὸς, οὔτε εἱμαρμένη πρατεῖ. Θεὸς γὰρ ῥίζας τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐκ παντὸς κακοῦ. τὸ γὰρ ἓν, καὶ μόνον ὂν, ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀγαθόν, ἐστιν εὐσέβεια. — *Lactant.*

Δύναται ὁ ἐπιστήμων πολλὰς ἀποστρέψαι ἐνεργείας τῶν ἀστέρων. — *Ptolem.*

Id est, —— sapiens dominabitur astris.

[y] Job. xxi. 17, 21, 23. [z] 1 Sam. ii. 33.

most devout meditation of the law, that is, to an exemplar devotion and strict religion: but then the curse was turned into a blessing, and the line masculine lived to an honourable old age. For the doctors of the Jews said, that God often changes his purposes concerning the death of man, when the sick person is "liberal in alms," or "fervent in prayer," or "changes his name," that is, gives up his name to God, by the serious purposes and religious vows of holy obedience. "He that followeth after righteousness" (alms it is in the vulgar Latin,) "and mercy, findeth life[a];" that verifies the first: and the fervent prayer of Hezekiah is a great instance of the second: and all the precedent discourse was intended for probation of the third, and proves that no disease is so deadly as a deadly sin; and the ways of righteousness are, therefore, advantages of health, and preservatives of life, (when health and life are good for us,) because they are certain title to all God's promises and blessings.

26. Upon supposition of these premises, I consider, there is no cause to wonder, that tender persons and the softest women endure the violences of art and physic, sharp pains of caustics and cupping glasses, the abscission of the most sensible part, for preservation of a mutilous and imperfect body: but it is a wonder that, when God hath appointed a remedy in grace apt to preserve nature, and that a dying unto sin should prolong our natural life, yet few men are willing to try the experiment; they will buy their life upon any conditions in the world but those, which are the best and easiest, any thing but religion and sanctity; although, for so doing, they are promised that immortality shall be added to the end of a long life, to make the life of a mortal partake of the eternal duration of an angel, or of God himself.

27. Fifthly: The last testimony of the excellence and gentleness of Christ's yoke, the fair load of Christianity, is the reasonableness of it, and the unreasonableness of its contrary[b]. For whatsoever the wisest men in the world, in all nations and religions, did agree upon, as most excellent in

[a] Prov. xxi. 21.

[b] Religio sapientiam adauget, et sapientia religionem. — *Lactan.* *Σοφῷ γὰρ αἰσχρὸν ἐξαμαρτάνειν.* — *Æschy. Prometh.*

itself, and of greatest power to make political, or future and immaterial felicities, all that, and much more, the holy Jesus adopted into his law: for they, receiving sparks or single irradiations from the regions of light, or else having fair tapers shining indeed excellently in representations and expresses of morality, were all involved and swallowed up into the body of light, the sun of righteousness. Christ's discipline was the breviary of all the wisdom of the best men, and a fair copy and transcript of his Father's wisdom; and there is nothing in the laws of our religion, but what is perfective of our spirits, excellent rules of religion, and rare expedients of obeying God by the nearest ways of imitation, and such duties which are the proper ways of doing benefits to all capacities and orders of men. But I remember my design now is not to represent Christianity to be a better religion than any other; for I speak to Christians, amongst whom we presuppose that: but I design to invite all Christians in name to be such as they are called, upon the interest of such arguments, which represent the advantages of obedience to our religion, as it is commanded us by God. And this I shall do yet farther, by considering that those Christian names who apprehend religion as the fashion of their country, and know no other use of a church but customary, or secular and profane, that, supposing Christian religion to have come from God, as we all profess to believe, there are no greater fools in the world, than such whose life conforms not to the pretence of their baptism and institution. They have all the signs and characters of fools, and indiscreet, unwary persons.

28. First: Wicked persons, like children and fools, choose the present, whatsoever it is, and neglect the infinite treasures of the future. They that have no faith nor foresight, have an excuse for snatching at what is now represented, because it is that *all* which can move them: but then such persons are infinitely distant from wisdom, whose understanding neither reason nor revelation hath carried farther than the present adherences; not only because they are narrow souls, who cannot look forward, and have nothing to distinguish them from beasts, who enjoy the present, being careless of what is to come; but also because whatsoever is present, is not fit satisfaction to the spirit, nothing

but gluttings of the sense and sottish appetites[c]. Moses was a wise person; and so esteemed and reported by the Spirit of God, because "he despised the pleasures of Pharaoh's court, having an eye to the recompense of reward;" that is, because he despised all the present arguments of delight, and preferred those excellences which he knew should be infinitely greater, as well as he knew they should be at all. He that would have rather chosen to stay in the theatre, and see the sports out, than quit the present spectacle, upon assurance to be adopted into Cæsar's family, had an offer made him too great for a fool; and yet his misfortune was not big enough for pity, because he understood nothing of his felicity, and rejected what he understood not. But he that prefers moments before eternity, and despises the infinite successions of eternal ages, that he may enjoy the present, not daring to trust God for what he sees not, and having no objects of his affections, but those which are the objects of his eyes, hath the impatience of a child, and the indiscretion of a fool, and the faithlessness of an unbeliever. The faith and hope of a Christian are the graces and portions of spiritual wisdom, which Christ designed as an antidote against this folly.

29. Secondly: Children and fools choose to please their senses rather than their reason, because they still dwell within the regions of sense, and have but little residence amongst intellectual essences. And because the needs of nature first employ our sensual appetites, these, being first in possession, would also fain retain it, and, therefore, for ever continue their title, and perpetually fight for it: but because the inferior faculty, fighting against the superior, is no better than a rebel, and that it takes reason for its enemy, it shows such actions which please the sense, and do not please the reason, to be unnatural, monstrous, and unreasonable. And it is a great disreputation to the understanding of a man, to be so cozened and deceived, as to choose money before a moral virtue; to please that which is common to him and beasts, rather than that part which is a communication of the Divine nature; to see him run after a bubble which himself

[c] Ἐι μὲν γὰρ πράττοις τι μεθ' ἡδονῆς αἰσχρὸν, ἡ μὲν ἡδονὴ παρῆλθε, τὸ δὲ κακὸν μένει. — *Hierocl.*

hath made, and the sun hath partycoloured, and to despise a treasure, which is offered to him, to call him off from pursuing that emptiness and nothing. But so does every vicious person, feeds upon husks, and loathes manna; worships cats and onions, the beggarly and basest of Egyptian deities, and neglects to adore and honour the eternal God: he prefers the society of drunkards before the communion of saints; or the fellowship of harlots before a quire of pure, chaste, and immaterial angels; the sickness and filth of luxury before the health and purities of chastity and temperance; a dish of red lentil pottage before a benison; drink before immortality, money before mercy, wantonness before the severe precepts of Christian philosophy, earth before heaven, and folly before the crowns, and sceptres, and glories of a kingdom. Against this folly Christian religion opposes contempt of things below, and setting our affections on things above.

30. Thirdly: Children and fools propound to themselves ends silly, low, and cheap; the getting of a nut-shell, or a bag of cherry stones, a gaud to entertain the fancy of a few minutes; and, in order to such ends, direct their counsels and designs. And indeed in this they are innocent. But persons not living according to the discipline of Christianity are as foolish in the designation of their ends; choosing things as unprofitable and vain to themselves, and yet with many mixtures of malice and injuriousness, both to themselves and others. His end is to cozen his brother of a piece of land, or to disgrace him by telling of a lie, to supplant his fortune, to make him miserable: ends which wise men and good men look upon as miseries and persecutions, instruments of affliction and regret; because every man is a member of a society, and hath some common terms of union and conjuncture, which make all the body susceptive of all accidents to any part. And it is a great folly, for pleasing of the eye, to snatch a knife which cuts our fingers; to bring affliction upon my brother or relative, which either must affect me, or else I am an useless, a base, or dead person. The ends of vice are ignoble and dishonourable: to discompose the quiet of a family, or to create jealousies, or to raise wars, or to make a man less happy, or apparently miserable, or to fish for the devil, and gain souls to our enemy, or to please a passion that undoes us, or to get something that

cannot satisfy us: this is the chain of counsels, and the great aims of unchristian livers; they are all of them extreme great miseries. And it is a great indecency for a man to propound an end less and more imperfect than our present condition; as if we went about to unravel our present composure, and to unite every degree of essence and capacity, and to retire back to our first matter and unshapen state, hoping to get to our journey's end by going backwards. Against this folly the holy Jesus opposed the fourth beatitude, or precept, of "hungering and thirsting after righteousness."

31. Fourthly: But children and fools, whatever their ends be, they pursue them with as much weakness and folly as they first chose them with indiscretion; running to broken cisterns, or to puddles, to quench their thirst. When they are hungry, they make fantastic banquets, or put coloquintida into their pottage, that they may be furnished with pot herbs; or are like the ass that desired to flatter his master, and, therefore, fawned upon him like a spaniel, and bruised his shoulders. Such indecencies of means and prosecutions of interests we find in unchristian courses. It may be, they propound to themselves riches for their end, and they use covetousness for their means, and that brings nought home; or else they steal to get it, and they are apprehended, and made to restore fourfold. Like moths gnawing a garment, they devour their own house, and, by greediness of desire, they destroy their content, making impatience the parent and instrument of all their felicity[d]. Or they are so greedy and imaginative, and have raised their expectation by an over-valuing esteem of temporary felicities, that, when they come, they fall short of their promises, and are indeed less than they would have been, by being, beforehand, apprehended greater than they could be. If their design be to represent themselves innocent and guiltless of a suspicion or a fault, they deny the fact, and double it. When they would repair their losses, they fall to gaming; and, besides that they are infinitely full of fears, passions, wrath, and violent disturbances, in the various chances of

[d] Τὰ δεινὰ κέρδη πημονὰς ἐργάζεται. — *Sophoc. Antig.*

Hos felicitas ingrata superfluit, ut semper pleni spei, vacui commodorum, præsentibus careant, dum futura prospectant. — *Panegyr. ad Constant. Filium.*

their game, that which they use to restore their fortune ruins even the little remnant, and condemns them to beggary, or what is worse. Thus evil men seek for content out of things that cannot satisfy, and take care to get that content; that is, they raise war to enjoy present peace, and renounce all content to get it: they strive to depress their neighbours, that they may be their equals; to disgrace them, to get reputation to themselves, (which arts, being ignoble, do them the most disparagement;) and resolve never to enter into the felicities of God by content taken in the prosperities of man, which is a making ourselves wretched by being wicked. Malice and envy is indeed a mighty curse; and the devil can show us nothing more foolish and unreasonable than envy, which is, in its very formality, a curse, an eating of coals and vipers, because my neighbour's table is full, and his cup is crowned with health and plenty. The Christian religion, as it chooseth excellent ends, so it useth proportionate and apt means. The most contradictory accident in the world, when it becomes hallowed by pious and Christian design, becomes a certain means of felicity and content. To quit our lands for Christ's sake, will certainly make us rich; to depart from our friends, will increase our relations and beneficiaries: but the striving to secure our temporal interests, by any other means than obedient actions, or obedient sufferings, is declared, by the holy Jesus, to be the greatest improvidence and ill husbandry in the world. Even in this world, Christ will repay us an hundred fold for all our losses, which we suffer for the interests of Christianity. In the same proportion we find, that all graces do the work of human felicities, with a more certain power and infallible effect than their contraries. Gratitude endears benefits, and procures more friendships: confession gets a pardon; impudence and lying doubles the fault, and exasperates the offended person; innocence is bold, and rocks a man asleep; but an evil conscience is a continual alarm. Against this folly, of using disproportionate means in order to their ends, the holy Jesus hath opposed the eight beatitudes, which, by contradictions of nature and improbable causes, according to human and erring estimate, bring our best and wisest ends to pass infallibly and divinely.

32. But this is too large a field to walk in: for it represents all the flatteries of sin to be a mere cozenage and deception of the understanding; and we find, by this scrutiny, that evil and unchristian persons are infinitely unwise, because they neglect the counsel of their superiors and their guides. They dote passionately upon trifles; they rely upon false foundations and deceiving principles; they are most confident when they are most abused; they are like shelled fish, singing loudest when their house is on fire about their ears, and being merriest, when they are most miserable and perishing; when they have the option of two things, they ever choose the worst; they are not masters of their own actions, but break all purposes at the first temptation; they take more pains to do themselves a mischief than would secure heaven: that is, they are rude, ignorant, foolish, unwary, and undiscerning people, in all senses, and to all purposes; and are incurable, but by their obedience and conformity to the holy Jesus, the eternal Wisdom of the Father.

33. Upon the strength of these premises, the yoke of Christianity must needs be apprehended light, though it had in it more pressure than it hath; because lightness or heaviness, being relative terms, are to be esteemed by comparison to others. Christianity is far easier than the yoke of Moses' law, not only because it consists of fewer rites, but also, because those perfecting and excellent graces, which integrate the body of our religion, are made easy by God's assisting, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost: and we may yet make it easier, by love and by fear, which are the proper products of the evangelical promises and threatenings. For I have seen persons in affrightment have carried burdens, and leaped ditches, and climbed walls, which their natural power could never have done. And if we understood the sadnesses of a cursed eternity, from which we are commanded to fly, and yet knew how near we are to it, and how likely to fall into it, it would create fears greater than a sudden fire, or a midnight alarm. And those unhappy souls who come to feel this truth, when their condition is without remedy, are made the more miserable by the apprehension of their stupid folly. For certainly the accursed spirits feel

the smart of hell once doubled upon them, by considering by what vain unsatisfying trifles they lost their happiness, with what pains they perished, and with how great ease they might have been beatified. And certain it is, Christian religion hath so furnished us with assistances, both exterior and interior, both of persuasion and advantages, that whatsoever Christ hath doubled upon us in perfection, he hath alleviated in aids.

34. And then, if we compare the state of Christianity with sin, all the preceding discourses were intended to represent how much easier it is to be a Christian than a vile and wicked person. And he that remembers, that whatever fair allurements may be pretended as invitations to a sin, are such false and unsatisfying pretences, that they drive a man to repent him of his folly, and, like a great laughter, end in a sigh, and expire in weariness and indignation; must needs confess himself a fool, for doing that which he knows will make him repent that he ever did it. A sin makes a man afraid when it thunders, and, in all dangers, the sin detracts the visor, and affrights him, and visits him when he comes to die, upbraiding him with guilt, and threatening misery. So that Christianity is the easiest law, and the easiest estate; it is more perfect and less troublesome; it brings us to felicity by ways proportionable, landing us in rest by easy and unperplexed journeys. This discourse I, therefore, thought necessary, because it reconciles our religion with those passions and desires, which are commonly made the instruments and arguments of sin. For we rarely meet with such spirits which love virtue so metaphysically, as to abstract her from all sensible and delicious compositions, and love the purity of the idea. St. Louis, the king, sent Ivo, bishop of Chartres, on an embassy; and he told, that he met a grave matron on the way, with fire in one hand, and water in the other; and, observing her to have a melancholic, religious, and fantastic deportment and look, asked her what those symbols meant, and what she meant to do with her fire and water? She answered, "My purpose is, with the fire to burn paradise, and, with my water, to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God." Whether the woman were only imaginative and sad, or also zealous, I

know not. But God knows, he would have few disciples, if the arguments of invitation were not of greater promise, than the labours of virtue are of trouble. And, therefore, the Spirit of God, knowing to what we are inflexible, and by what we are made most ductile and malleable, hath propounded virtue clothed and dressed with such advantages, as may entertain even our sensitive part and first desires[e], that those also may be invited to virtue, who understand not what is just and reasonable, but what is profitable; who are more moved with advantage than justice. And because emolument is more felt than innocence, and a man may be poor for all his gift of chastity; the holy Jesus, to endear the practices of religion, hath represented godliness unto us under the notion of "gain," and "sin as unfruitful:" and yet, besides all the natural and reasonable advantages, every virtue hath a supernatural reward, a gracious promise attending; and every vice is not only naturally deformed, but is made more ugly by a threatening, and horrid by an appendant curse. Henceforth, therefore, let no man complain, that the commandments of God are impossible; for they are not only possible, but easy; and they that say otherwise, and do accordingly, take more pains to carry the instruments of their own death, than would serve to ascertain them of life. And if we would do as much for Christ as we have done for sin, we should find the pains less, and the pleasure more. And, therefore, such complainers are without excuse; for certain it is, they that can go in foul ways, must not say they cannot walk in fair: they that march over rocks, in despite of so many impediments, can travel the even ways of religion and peace, when the holy Jesus is their guide, and the Spirit is their guardian, and infinite felicities are at their journey's end, and all the reason of the world, political, economical, and personal, do entertain and support them in the travel of the passage.

[e] —— Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam
Præmia si tollas? *Juv.*
Sublatis studiorum pretiis, etiam studia peritura, ut minùs decora.
Tacit.

Vide Ciceron. Tuscul. ii. Lact. lib. iii. c. 27. Instit.

Virtus per seipsam non beata est, quoniam in perferendis, ut dixi, malis tota vis ejus est. — *Idem*, c. 12. *Aug. Ep.* 12.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, who gavest laws unto the world, that mankind, being united to thee by the bands of obedience, might partake of all thy glories and felicities; open our understanding, give us the spirit of discerning, and just apprehension of all the beauties, with which thou hast enamelled virtue, to represent it beauteous and amiable in our eyes; that, by the allurements of exterior decencies and appendant blessings, our present desires may be entertained, our hopes promoted, our affections satisfied; and love, entering in by these doors, may dwell in the interior regions of the will. O make us to love thee for thyself, and religion for thee, and all the instruments of religion, in order to thy glory and our own felicities. Pull off the visors of sin, and discover its deformities, by the lantern of thy word, and the light of the Spirit; that I may never be bewitched with sottish appetites. Be pleased to build up all the contents I expect in this world, upon the interests of a virtuous life, and the support of religion; that I may be rich in good works, content in the issues of thy providence, my health may be the result of temperance and severity, my mirth in spiritual emanations, my rest in hope, my peace in a good conscience, my satisfaction and acquiescence in thee; that from content I may pass to an eternal fulness, from health to immortality, from grace to glory; walking in the paths of righteousness, by the waters of comfort, to the land of everlasting rest; to feast in the glorious communications of eternity, eternally adoring, loving, and enjoying the infinity of the ever-blessed and mysterious Trinity; to whom be glory, and honour, and dominion, now and for ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE XVI.

Of Certainty of Salvation.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus took an account of the first legation and voyage of his apostles, he found them rejoicing in privileges and exterior powers, in their authority over unclean

spirits: but weighing it in his balance, he found the cause too light, and, therefore, diverted it upon the right object: "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven[a]." The revelation was confirmed, and more personally applied, in answer to St. Peter's question, "We have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have, therefore?" Their Lord answered, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Amongst these persons, to whom Christ spake, Judas was; he was one of the twelve, and he had a throne allotted for him; his name was described in the book of life, and a sceptre and a crown was deposited for him too. For we must not judge of Christ's meaning by the event, since he spake these words to produce in them faith, comfort, and joy, in the best objects: it was a sermon of duty, as well as a homily of comfort; and, therefore, was equally intended to all the college: and since the number of thrones is proportioned to the number of men, it is certain there was no exception of any man there included; and yet it is as certain Judas never came to sit upon the throne, and his name was blotted out of the book of life. Now, if we put these ends together, that in Scripture it was not revealed to any man concerning his final condition, but to the dying penitent thief, and to the twelve apostles, that twelve thrones were designed for them, and a promise made of their enthronization; and yet that no man's final estate is so clearly declared miserable and lost, as that of Judas, one of the twelve, to whom a throne was promised; the result will be, that the election of holy persons is a condition allied to duty, absolute and infallible in the general, and supposing all the dispositions and requisites concurring; but fallible in the particular, if we fall off from the mercies of the covenant, and prevaricate the conditions. But the thing which is most observable is, that if, in persons so eminent and privileged, and to whom a revelation of their election was made as a particular grace, their condition had one weak leg, upon

[a] Quod dixit Jesus 72 discipulis, [Lucæ, x. 20.] eorum nomina descripta esse in cœlo; prædestinationem licet aliquatenus denotet, non tamen ad gloriam, sed ad munus evangelicum et ministerium in regno. Alii autem verba illa non rem facti denotare, sed causam gaudii tantùm enarrare justam et legitimam; ex suppositione scil. et quando hoc contigerit, aut ad effectum perducetur. Utcunque autem verba significent, certum est doctores ecclesiæ non paucos tradidisse 72 discipulos Christum reliquisse, nec redisse demuo.

which because it did rely for one half of the interest, it could be no stronger than its supporters: the condition of lower persons, to whom no revelation is made, no privileges are indulged, no greatness of spiritual eminence is appendant, as they have no greater certainty in the thing, so they have less in person; and are, therefore, to "work out their salvation, with" great "fears and tremblings" of spirit.

2. The purpose of this consideration is, that we do not judge of our final condition by any discourses of our own, relying upon God's secret counsels, and predestination of eternity. This is a mountain, upon which whosoever climbs, like Moses, to behold the land of Canaan at great distances, may please his eyes, or satisfy his curiosity, but is certain never to enter that way. It is like inquiring into fortunes, concerning which Phavorinus, the philosopher, spake not unhandsomely[b]: "They that foretell, events of destiny and secret providence, either foretell, sad things, or prosperous. If they promise prosperous, and deceive, you are made miserable by a vain speculation. If they threaten ill fortune, and say false, thou art made wretched by a false fear. But if they foretell, adversity, and say true, thou art made miserable by thy own apprehension, before thou art so by destiny; and many times the fear is worse than the evil feared. But if they promise felicities, and promise truly what shall come to pass, then thou shalt be wearied by an impatience and a suspended hope, and thy hope shall ravish and deflower the joys of thy possession[c]." Much of it is hugely applicable to the present question; and our blessed Lord, when he was petitioned that he would grant to the two sons of Zebedee, that they might sit, one on the right hand and the other on the left, in his kingdom; rejected their desire, and only promised them what concerned their duty and their suffering; referring them to that, and leaving the final event of men to the disposition of his Father. This is the great secret of the kingdom, which God hath locked up and sealed with the counsels of eternity. "The sure foundation of God standeth, having

[b] Ad scelus ab hujusmodi votis facillimè transitur.— *Tacit.*

——— Nos parvum ac debile vulgus
Scrutamur penitus Superos: hinc pallor et iræ,
Hinc scelus, insidiæque, et nulla modestia voti.— *Statius.*

[c] Futurum gaudii fructum spes tibi jam præfloraverit.—*A. Gellius*, lib. xiv.

this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his[d]." This seal shall never be broken up till the great day of Christ; in the meantime, the Divine knowledge is the only repository of the final sentences, and this " way of God is unsearchable, and past finding out." And, therefore, if we be solicitous and curious to know what God, in the counsels of eternity, hath decreed concerning us; he hath, in two fair tables, described all those sentences from whence we must take accounts, the revelations of Scripture, and the book of conscience. The first recites the law and the conditions; the other gives in evidence: the first is clear, evident, and conspicuous; the other, when it is written with large characters, may also be discerned; but there are many little accents, periods, distinctions, and little significations of actions, which either are there written in water, or sullied over with carelessness, or blotted with forgetfulness, or not legible by ignorance, or misconstrued by interest and partiality, that it will be extremely difficult to read the hand upon the wall, or to copy out one line of the eternal sentence. And, therefore, excellent was the counsel of the son of Sirach: " Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength: but what is commanded thee, think thereupon with reverence; for it is not needful for thee to see with thine eyes the things, that are in secret[e]." For whatsoever God hath revealed in general concerning election, it concerns all persons within the pale of Christianity. He hath conveyed notice to all Christian people, that they are the sons of God, that they are the heirs of eternity, " coheirs with Christ, partakers of the Divine nature;" meaning, that such they are by the design of God, and the purposes of the manifestation of his Son. The election of God is disputed in Scripture, to be an act of God separating whole nations, and rejecting others; in each of which, many particular instances there were contrary to the general and universal purpose; and of the elect nations, many particulars perished, and many of the rejected people " sat down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven:" and to those persons to whom God was more particular, and was pleased to show the scrolls of his eternal counsels, and to reveal their particular elections,

[d] 2 Tim. ii. 19. [e] Ecclus. iii. 21, 22.

as he did to the twelve apostles, he showed them wrapped up and sealed; and, to take off their confidences or presumptions, he gave probation, in one instance, that those scrolls may be cancelled, that his purpose concerning particulars may be altered by us; and, therefore, that he did not discover the bottom of the abyss, but some purposes of special grace and indefinite design. But his peremptory, final, unalterable decree, he keeps in the cabinets of the eternal ages, never to be unlocked, till the angel of the covenant shall declare the unalterable, universal sentence.

3. But, as we take the measure of the course of the sun by the dimensions of the shadows made by our own bodies, or our own instruments; so must we take the measures of eternity by the span of a man's hand, and guess at what God decrees of us, by considering how our relations and endearments are to him. And it is observable, that all the confidences, which the Spirit of God hath created in the elect, are built upon duty, and stand or fall, according to the strength or weakness of such supporters. "We know we are translated from death to life, by our love unto the brethren[f]:" meaning, that the performance of our duty is the best consignation to eternity, and the only testimony God gives us of our election. And, therefore, we are to make our judgments accordingly. And here I consider, that there is no state of a Christian, in which, by virtue of the covenant of the Gospel, it is effectively and fully declared, that his sins are actually pardoned, but only in baptism, at our first coming to Christ; when he "redeems us from our vain conversation;" when he makes us become "sons of God;" when he "justifies us freely by his grace," when we are purified by faith, when we make a covenant with Christ, to live for ever according to his laws. And this I shall suppose I have already proved and explicated, in the Discourse of Repentance. So that whoever is certain he hath not offended God since that time, and in nothing transgresseth the laws of Christianity, he is certain that he actually remains in the state of baptismal purity: but it is too certain, that this certainty remains not long; but we commonly throw some dirt into our waters of baptism, and stain our white robe, which we then put on.

[f] 1 John, iii. 14.

4. But then, because our restitution to this state is a thing that consists of so many parts, is so divisible, various, and uncertain, whether it be arrived to the degree of innocence, (and our innocence consists in a mathematical point, and is not capable of degrees any more than unity, because one stain destroys our being innocent;) it is, therefore, a very difficult matter to say, that we have done all our duty towards our restitution to baptismal grace; and if we have not done all that we can do, it is harder to say that God hath accepted that, which is less than the conditions we entered into, when we received the great justification and pardon of sins. We all know we do less than our duty, and we hope that God makes abatements for human infirmities; but we have but a few rules to judge by, and they not infallible in themselves, and we yet more fallible in the application, whether we have not mingled some little minutes of malice in the body of infirmities, and how much will bear excuse; and in what time, and to what persons, and to what degrees, and upon what endeavours, we shall be pardoned. So that all the interval, between our losing baptismal grace and the day of our death, we walk in a cloud; having lost the certain knowledge of our present condition, by our prevarications. And, indeed, it is a very hard thing, for a man to know his own heart: and he that shall observe, how often himself hath been abused by confidences and secret imperfections, and how the greatest part of Christians, in name only, do think themselves in a very good condition, when God knows they are infinitely removed from it; (and yet, if they did not think themselves well and sure, it is unimaginable they should sleep so quietly, and walk securely, and consider negligently, and yet proceed confidently.) He that considers this, and upon what weak and false principles of divinity men have raised their strengths and persuasions, will easily consent to this; that it is very easy for men to be deceived, in taking estimate of their present condition, of their being in the state of grace.

5. But there is great variety of men, and difference of degrees; and every step of returning to God may reasonably add one degree of hope, till at last it comes to the certainty and top of hope. Many men believe themselves to be in the state of grace, and are not; many are in the state of grace,

and are infinitely fearful they are out of it; and many that are in God's favour, do think they are so, and they are not deceived. And all this is certain. For some sin that sin of presumption, and flattery of themselves, and some good persons are vexed with violent fears and temptations to despair, and all are not: and when their hopes are right, yet some are strong, and some are weak; for they that are well persuaded of their present condition, have persuasions as different, as are the degrees of their approach to innocence; and he that is at the highest, hath also such abatements, which are apt and proper for the conservation of humility and godly fear. "I am guilty of nothing," (saith St. Paul,) "but I am not hereby justified[g];" meaning thus: Though I be innocent, for aught I know, yet God, who judges otherwise than we judge, may find something to reprove in me: "It is God that judges," that is, concerning my degrees of acceptance and hopes of glory. If the person be newly recovering from a state of sin, because his state is imperfect, and his sin not dead, and his lust active, and his habit not quite extinct, it is easy for a man to be too hasty in pronouncing well. He is wrapt up in a cloak of clouds, hidden and encumbered[h]; and his brightest day is but twilight, and his discernings dark, conjectural, and imperfect; and his heart is like a cold hand newly applied to the fire, full of pain, and whether the heat or the cold be strongest, is not easy to determine; or like middle colours, which no man can tell to which of the extremes they are to be accounted. But according as persons grow in grace, so they may grow in confidence of their present condition. It is not certain they will do so; for sometimes the beauty of the tabernacle is covered with goats' hair and skins of beasts, and holy people do infinitely deplore the want of such graces, which God observes in them with great complacency and acceptance. Both these cases say, that to be certainly persuaded of our present condition is not a duty: sometimes it is not possible, and sometimes it is better to be otherwise.

[g] 1 Cor. iv. 4.

Cùm multis in rebus offendamus Deum, majorem tamen offensarum partem ne intelligimus quidem; ideirco ait apostolus, Nihil conscius sum, &c. q. d. Multa delicta committo, quæ committere me non intelligo. Propter hanc causam propheta ait, Delicta quis intelligit? — *S. Basil.* c. 2. *Monast. Constit.*

[h] Eccles. ix. 1, 2.

But if we consider of this certainty, as a blessing and a reward, there is no question but, in a great and an eminent sanctity of life, there may also be a great confidence and fulness of persuasion, that our present being is well and gracious, and then it is certain that such persons are not deceived. For the thing itself being sure, if the persuasion answers to it, it is needless to dispute of the degree of certainty, and the manner of it. Some persons are heartily persuaded of their being reconciled; and of these, some are deceived, and some are not deceived; and there is no sign to distinguish them, but by that which is the thing signified: a holy life, according to the strict rules of Christian discipline, tells what persons are confident, and who are presumptuous. But the certainty is reasonable in none but in old Christians, habitually holy persons; not in new converts, or in lately lapsed people: for, concerning them, we find the Spirit of God speaking with clauses of restraint and ambiguity; "a perhaps[l]," and, "who knoweth," and, "peradventure, the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee;" God may have mercy on thee. And that God hath done so, they only have reason to be confident, whom God hath blessed with a lasting, continuing piety, and who have wrought out the habits of their precontracted vices.

6. But we find, in Scripture, many precepts given to holy persons, being in the state of grace, to secure their standing, and perpetuate their present condition. For, "he that endureth unto the end, he" only, "shall be saved[k]," said our blessed Saviour: and, "He that standeth, let him take heed lest he fall[l]:" and, "Thou standest by faith; be not high-minded, but fear[m]:" and, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling[n]." "Hold fast that thou hast, and let no man take the crown from thee[o]." And it was excellent advice; for one church had "lost their first love[p]," and was likely also to lose their crown. And St. Paul himself, who had once entered within the veil, and seen unutterable glories, yet was forced to endure hardship, and to fight against his

[l] Beatus Daniel, præscius futurorum, de sententia Dei dubitat. Rem temerariam faciunt, qui audacter veniam pollicentur peccantibus.—*S. Hieron.* Dan. iv. 27. Joel, ii. 14. Acts, viii. 22.

[k] Matt. xxiv. 13. [l] 1 Cor. x. 12. [m] Rom. xi. 20.
[n] Phil. ii. 12. [o] Rev. iii. 11. [p] Chap. xxiv.

own disobedient appetite, and to do violence to his inclinations; for fear that, "whilst he preached to others, himself should become a cast-away." And since we observe, in holy story, that Adam and Eve fell in paradise, and the angels fell in heaven itself, stumbling at the very jewels which pave the streets of the celestial Jerusalem; and in Christ's family, one man, for whom his Lord had prepared a throne, turned devil; and that, in the number of the deacons, it is said that one turned apostate, who yet had been a man full of the Holy Ghost: it will lessen our train, and discompose the gaieties of our present confidence, to think that our securities cannot be really distinguished from danger and uncertainties. For every man walks upon two legs: one is firm, invariable, constant, and eternal; but the other is his own. God's promises are the objects of our faith; but the events and final conditions of our souls, which is consequent to our duty, can, at the best, be but the objects of our hope. And either there must in this be a less certainty, or else faith and hope are not two distinct graces. God's gifts and vocation "are without repentance[q];" meaning, on God's part: but the very people, concerning whom St. Paul used the expression, were reprobate and cut off, and, in good time, shall be called again; in the meantime, many single persons perish. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus[r]." God will look to that, and it will never fail; but then they must secure the following period, and "not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Behold the goodness of God towards thee," saith St. Paul, "if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off[s]." And if this be true, concerning the whole church of the Gentiles, to whom the apostle then made the address, and concerning whose election the decree was public and manifest, that they might be cut off, and their abode in God's favour was upon condition of their perseverance in the faith; much more is it true in single persons, whose election, in particular, is shut up in the abyss, and permitted to the condition of our faith and obedience, and the revelations of doomsday.

7. Certain it is, that God hath given to holy persons "the Spirit of adoption," enabling them to "cry, Abba,

[q] Rom. xi. 29. [r] Rom. viii. 1. [s] Rom. xi. 22.

Father[t]," and to account themselves for sons; and by this "Spirit we know we dwell in him[u];" and, therefore, it is called in Scripture, "the earnest of the Spirit[x]:" though, at its first mission, and when the apostle wrote and used this appellative, the Holy Ghost was of greater signification, and a more visible earnest and endearment of their hopes, than it is to most of us since. For the visible sending of the Holy Ghost upon many believers, in gifts, signs, and prodigies, was infinite argument to make them expect events, as great beyond that, as that was beyond the common gifts of men: just as miracles and prophecy, which are gifts of the Holy Ghost, were arguments of probation for the whole doctrine of Christianity. And this being a mighty verification of the great promise, the promise of the Father, was an apt instrument to raise their hopes and confidences, concerning those other promises which Jesus made, the promises of immortality and eternal life, of which the present miraculous graces of the Holy Spirit were an earnest, and in the nature of a contracting penny: and still, also, the Holy Ghost, though in another manner, is "an earnest of the great price of the heavenly calling," the rewards of heaven; though not so visible and apparent as at first, yet as certain and demonstrative, where it is discerned, or where it is believed, as it is and ought to be in every person, who does any part of his duty; because, by the Spirit we do it, and without him we cannot. And since we either feel or believe the presence and gifts of the Holy Ghost to holy purposes, (for whom we receive voluntarily, we cannot easily receive without a knowledge of his reception,) we cannot but entertain him, as an argument of greater good hereafter, and an earnest-penny of the perfection of the present grace, that is, of the rewards of glory; glory and grace differing no otherwise, than as an earnest, in part of payment, does from the whole price, "the price of our high calling." So that the Spirit is an earnest, not because he always signifies to us, that we are actually in the state of grace, but by way of argument or reflection; we know we do belong to God, when we receive his Spirit; (and all Christian people have received him, if they were rightly baptized and confirmed;) I say, we know, by that testimony,

[t] Rom. viii. 15. [u] 1 John, iv. 13. [x] 2 Cor. i. 22, v. 5.

that we belong to God; that is, we are the people with whom God hath made a covenant, to whom he hath promised and intends greater blessings, to which the present gifts of the Spirit are in order. But all this is conditional, and is not an immediate testimony of the certainty and future event; but of the event, as it is possibly future, and may, (without our fault,) be reduced to act as certainly as it is promised, or as the earnest is given in hand. And this the Spirit of God oftentimes tells us, in secret visitations and public testimonies: and this is that which St. Paul calls, "tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking of the Holy Ghost," and "tasting of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come[y]." But yet, some that have done so have fallen away, and have "quenched the Spirit," and have given back the earnest of the Spirit, and contracted new relations; and God hath been their Father no longer, for they have done the works of the devil. So that, if new converts be uncertain of their present state, old Christians are not absolutely certain they shall persevere. They are as sure of it, as they can be of future acts of theirs, which God hath permitted to their own power. But this certainty cannot exclude all fear, till their charity be perfect; only according to the strength of their habits, so is the confidence of their abodes in grace.

8. Beyond this, some holy persons have degrees of persuasion, superadded as largesses and acts of grace; God loving to bless one degree of grace with another, till it comes to a confirmation in grace, which is a state of salvation directly opposite to obduration; and as this is irremediable and irrecoverable, so is the other inadmissible: as God never saves a person obdurate and obstinately impenitent, so he never loses a man, whom he hath confirmed in grace[z]; "whom he" so "loves, he loves unto the end;" and to others, indeed, he offers his persevering love, but they will not entertain it with a persevering duty, they will not be beloved unto the end. But I insert this caution, that every man, that is in this condition of a confirmed grace, does not always know it; but sometimes God draws aside the curtains of peace, and shows him his throne, and visits him with

[y] Heb. vi. 4, 5.

[z] ——— Hic felix, nullo turbante deorum;
Is, nullo parcente, miser———

irradiations of glory, and sends him a little star to stand over his dwelling, and then again covers it with a cloud. It is certain, concerning some persons, that they shall never fall, and that God will not permit them to the danger or probability of it; to such it is morally impossible: but these are but few, and themselves know it not, as they know a demonstrative proposition, but as they see the sun, sometimes breaking from a cloud very brightly, but all day long giving necessary and sufficient light.

9. Concerning the multitude of believers, this discourse is not pertinent; for they only take their own accounts by the imperfections of their own duty, blended with the mercies of God: the cloud gives light on one side, and is dark upon the other; and sometimes a bright ray peeps through the fringes of a shower, and immediately hides itself; that we might be humble and diligent; striving forwards, and looking upwards; endeavouring our duty, and longing after heaven; "working out our salvation with fear and trembling;" and, in good time, "our calling and election" may be assured, when we first, according to the precept of the apostle, "use all diligence." St. Paul, when he writ his first epistle to the Corinthians, was more fearful of being reprobate[a]; and, therefore, he used exterior arts of mortification. But when he writ to the Romans, which was a good while after, we find him more confident of his final condition; "persuaded, that neither height, nor depth, angel, nor principality, nor power, could separate him from the love of God, in Jesus Christ[b]:" and when he grew to his latter end, when he wrote to St. Timothy[c], he was more confident yet, and declared, that now a "crown of righteousness was," certainly, "laid up for him;" for now he had "fought the fight, and finished his course, the time of his departure was at hand." Henceforth he knew no more fear; his love was perfect as this state would permit, and that "cast out all fear." According to this precedent, if we reckon our securities, we are not likely to be reproved by any words of Scripture, or by the condition of human infirmity. But when the confidence outruns our growth in grace, it is itself a sin; though, when the confidence is equal with the grace, it is of itself no regular and universal duty, but a

[a] 1 Cor. ix. 27. [b] Rom. viii. 38. [c] 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8.

blessing and a reward, indulged by special dispensation, and in order to personal necessities, or accidental purposes. For only so much hope is simply necessary, as excludes despair, and encourages our duty, and glorifies God, and entertains his mercy; but that the hope should be without fear, is not given, but to the highest faith, and the most excellent charity, and to habitual, ratified, and confirmed Christians; and to them, also, with some variety. The sum is this: all that are in the state of beginners and imperfection, have a conditional certainty, changeable and fallible in respect of us, (for we meddle not with what it is in God's secret purposes;) changeable, I say, as their wills and resolutions. They that are grown towards perfection, have more reason to be confident, and many times are so: but still, although the strength of the habits of grace adds degrees of moral certainty to their expectation, yet it is but as their condition is, hopeful and promising, and of a moral determination. But to those few, to whom God hath given confirmation in grace, he hath also given a certainty of condition; and, therefore, if that be revealed to them, their persuasions are certain and infallible. If it be not revealed to them, their condition is in itself certain, but their persuasion is not so; but in the highest kind of hope, "an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast."

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, whose counsels are in the great deep, and thy ways past finding out; thou hast built our faith upon thy promises, our hopes upon thy goodness, and hast described our paths between the waters of comfort and the dry, barren land, of our own duties and affections: we acknowledge that all our comforts derive from thee, and to ourselves we owe all our shame, and confusions, and degrees of desperation. Give us the assistances of the Holy Ghost, to help us in performing our duty; and give us those comforts and visitations of the Holy Ghost, which thou, in thy infinite and eternal wisdom, knowest most apt and expedient, to encourage our duties, to entertain our hopes, to alleviate our sadnesses, to refresh our spirits, and to endure our abode and constant endeavours, in the strictnesses of religion and sanctity. Lead us, dearest God,

from grace to grace, from imperfection to strength, from acts to habits, from habits to confirmation in grace, that we may also pass into the regions of comfort, receiving the earnest of the Spirit, and the adoption of sons; till, by such a signature, we be consigned to glory, and enter into the possession of the inheritance, which we expect in the kingdom of thy Son, and in the fruition of the felicities of thee, O gracious Father, God eternal. Amen.

SECTION XIV.

Of the Third Year of the Preaching of Jesus.

1. But Jesus, knowing of the death of the Baptist, Herod's jealousy, and the envy of the Pharisees, retired into a desert place, beyond the lake, together with his apostles: for the people pressed so upon them, they had not leisure to eat. But neither there could he be hid; but great multitudes flocked thither also, to whom he preached many things. And afterwards, because there were no villages in the neighbourhood, lest they should faint in their return to their houses, he caused them "to sit down upon the grass," and, with "five loaves of barley, and two small fishes, he satisfied five thousand men, besides women and children," and caused the disciples to "gather up the fragments," which, being amassed together, "filled twelve baskets." Which miracles had so much proportion to the understanding, and met so happily with the affections of the people, that they were convinced that this was the "Messias, who was to come into the world," and had a purpose to have "taken him by force, and made him a king."

2. But he, that left his Father's kingdom, to take upon him the miseries and infelicities of the world, fled from the offers of a kingdom, and their tumultuary election, as from an enemy; and, therefore, sending his disciples to the ship before, towards Bethsaida, he ran into the mountains, to hide himself, till the multitude should scatter to their several habitations; he, in the meantime, taking the opportunity of that retirement for the advantage of his prayers. But when

the apostles were far engaged in the deep, a great tempest arose, with which they were pressed to the extremity of danger and the last refuges, labouring in sadness and hopelessness, till "the fourth watch of the night," when, in the midst of their fears and labour, "Jesus comes, walking on the sea," and appeared to them, which turned their fears into affrightments; for "they supposed it had been a spirit:" but he appeased their fears, with his presence, and manifestation who he was; which yet they desired to have proved to them by a sign. For "Simon Peter said unto him, Master, if it be thou, command me to come to thee on the waters." The Lord did so; and Peter, throwing himself upon the confidence of his Master's power and providence, came out of the ship, and his fear began to weigh him down, and "he cried, saying, Lord, save me. Jesus took him by the hand," reproved the timorousness of his faith, and "went with him into the ship:" where, when they had "worshipped him," and admired the divinity of his power and person, they presently "came into the land of Gennesareth," the ship arriving "at the port immediately;" and "all that were sick," or possessed with unclean spirits, "were brought to him, and as many as touched the border of his garment were made whole."

3. By this time, they whom Jesus had left on the other side of the lake, had come as far as Capernaum to seek him, wondering that he was there before them: but, upon the occasion of their so diligent inquisition, Jesus observes to them, "That it was not the divinity of the miracle that provoked their zeal, but the satisfaction they had in the loaves, a carnal complacency in their meal; and, upon that intimation, speaks of celestial bread, the divine nutriment of souls; and then discourses of the mysterious and symbolical manducation of Christ himself, affirming that he himself was 'the bread of life, that came down from heaven,' that he would give his disciples 'his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink,' and all this should be 'for the life of the world,' to nourish unto life eternal; so that, without it, a happy eternity could not be obtained." Upon this discourse, "divers of his disciples," (amongst whom St. Mark, the evangelist, is said to be one, though he was afterwards recalled by

Simon Peter,) " forsook him[a]," being scandalized by their literal and carnal understanding of those words of Jesus, which he intended in a spiritual sense. For " the words that he spake" were not profitable in the sense of flesh and blood, but " they are spirit, and they are life," himself being the expounder, who best knew his own meaning.

4. When Jesus saw this great defection of his disciples from him, he turned him to the twelve apostles, and asked, if they " also would go away? Simon Peter answered, Lord, whither shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life: and we believe, and are sure, thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Although this public confession was made by Peter, in the name and confidence of the other apostles, yet Jesus told them, that even amongst the twelve, there was " one devil;" meaning Judas Iscariot, " who afterwards betrayed him." This he told them prophetically, that they might perceive the sad accidents, which afterwards happened, did not invade and surprise him, in the disadvantages of ignorance or improvision, but came by his own knowledge and providence.

5. Then came to him the Pharisees, and some Scribes, which came from Jerusalem and Galilee, (for " Jesus would not go to Judæa, because the Jews laid wait to kill him,") and quarrelled with him about certain impertinent, unnecessary rites, derived to them, not by Divine sanction, but " ordinances of man;" such as were " washing their hands oft when they eat, baptizing cups and platters, and washing tables and beds;" which ceremonies the apostles of Jesus did not observe, but attended diligently to the simplicity and spiritual holiness of their Master's doctrine. But, in return to their vain demands, Jesus gave them a sharp reproof, for prosecuting these and many other traditions to the discountenance of Divine precepts; and, in particular, they taught men to give to the corban, and refused to supply the necessity of their parents, thinking it to be religion, though they neglected piety and charity. And again, he thunders out woes and sadnesses against their impieties, for being curious of minutes, and punctual in rites and ceremonials, but most

[a] Epiphan. Hæres. 51.

negligent and incurious of judgment and the love of God; for their pride, for their hypocrisy, for their imposing burdens upon others, which themselves helped not to support; for taking away the key of knowledge from the people, obstructing the passages to heaven; for approving the acts of their fathers in persecuting the prophets. But, for the question itself concerning washings, Jesus taught the people, that no outward impurity did stain the soul, in the sight of God, but all pollution is from within, from the corruption of the heart, and impure thoughts, unchaste desires, and unholy purposes, and that charity is the best purifier in the world.

6. And thence "Jesus departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house," that he might "not be known." The diligence of a mother's love, and sorrow and necessity, found him out in his retirement; for a "Syrophœnician woman came, and besought him, that he would cast the devil out of her daughter." But Jesus discoursed to her, by way of discomfort and rejection of her, for her nation's sake. But the seeming denial did but enkindle her desires, and made her importunity more bold and undeniable; she begged but "some crumbs that fell from the children's table," but one instance of favour to her daughter, which he poured forth, without measure, upon the sons and daughters of Israel. Jesus was pleased with her zeal and discretion, and pitied her daughter's infelicity, and dismissed her with saying, "The devil was gone out of her daughter."

7. But Jesus staid not long here, but returning "to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of Decapolis, they brought unto him a man deaf and dumb," whom Jesus cured by "touching his tongue, and putting his fingers in his ears:" which caused the people to give a large testimony in approbation of all his actions. And they followed him unto a mountain, bringing to him multitudes of diseased people, and he healed them all. But because the people had followed him "three days, and had nothing to eat," Jesus, in pity to their need, resolved to feast them once more at the charge of a miracle: therefore, taking "seven loaves and a few small fishes, he blessed them, and satisfied four thousand men, besides women and children." And there remained "seven baskets full of broken bread and fish."

From whence Jesus departed, by ship, to the coasts of Mageddon and Dalmanutha, whither " the Pharisees and Sadducees came, seeking of him a sign." But Jesus rejected their impertinent and captious demand, knowing they did it to ill purposes, and with disaffection; reproving them, that they " discerned the face of the sky," and the prognostics of " fair or foul weather," but " not the signs of the times" of the Son of Man. However, since they had neglected so great demonstrations of miracles, gracious discourses, holy laws and prophecies, they must expect " no other sign, but the sign of the prophet Jonas;" meaning, the resurrection of his body after three days' burial: and so he dismissed the impertinent inquisitors.

8. And passing again over the lake, as his disciples were solicitous, because " they had forgot to take bread," he gave them caution to " beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the leaven of Herod;" meaning, the hypocrisy and vanities of the one, and the heresy of the other. For Herod's leaven was the pretence that he was the Messias, which the sect of the Herodians did earnestly and spitefully promote. And, after this entertainment of themselves by the way, they came together to Bethsaida, where Jesus cured a blind man, with a collyrium of spittle, salutary as balsam, or the purest eye-bright, when his Divine benediction once had hallowed it. But Jesus staid not there, but, departing thence into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, out of Herod's power, (for it was in Philip's jurisdiction,) after he had " prayed with his disciples," he inquired what opinion the world had of him, and " whom they reported him to be? They answered, Some say thou art John the Baptist, some that thou art Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the prophets:" for, in Galilee especially, the sect of the Pharisees was mightily disseminated, whose opinion it was, that the souls of dead men, according to their several merits, did transmigrate into other bodies of very perfect and excellent persons. And, therefore, in all this variety, none hit upon the right, or fancied him to be a distinct person from the ancients; but, although they differed in the assignation of his name, yet, generally, they agreed it was the soul of a departed prophet, which had passed into another body. But Jesus asked the

apostles their opinion; and Peter, in the name of all the rest, made an open and confident confession, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

9. This confession Jesus not only confirmed as true, but as "revealed by God," and of fundamental necessity: for, after the blessing of Peter's person, upon allusion of Peter's name, Jesus said, that "upon this rock [the article of Peter's confession] he would build his church," promising to it assistances, even to perpetuity, insomuch that "the gates of hell," that is, persecution, and death, and the grave, "should never prevail against it:" adding, withal, a promise to Peter, in behalf of all the rest, as he had made a confession for them all, that he would "give unto him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, so that whatsoever he should bind on earth, should be bound in heaven; and whatsoever he should loose on earth, should be loosed in heaven;" a power which he never communicated before or since, but to their successors; greater than the large charter of nature, and the donative of creation, in which all the creatures under heaven were made subject to man's empire, but, till now, heaven itself was never subordinate to human ministration.

10. And now the days, from henceforward to the death of Jesus, we must reckon to be like the vigils, or eves, of his passion; for now he began, and often did ingeminate, those sad predictions of his unhandsome usage he should shortly find; that he should be "rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and suffer many things at Jerusalem, and be killed, and be raised up the third day." But Peter, hearing that sad discourse, so contrary to his hopes, which he had blended with temporal expectances, (for he had learned the doctrine of Christ's advent, but not the mystery of the cross,) in great and mistaken civility, took Jesus aside, "and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." But Jesus, full of zeal against so soft and human admonition, that savoured nothing of God, or of abstracted immaterial considerations, chid Peter bitterly: "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me." And, calling his disciples to him, told them a second part of a sad docrine, that not only himself, but all they also, must suffer. For when the head was to be crowned with thorns, if the members were wrapt in soft-

nesses, it was an unhandsome indecency, and a disunion too near an antipathy; and, therefore, whoever will be the disciple of Jesus, must "take up his cross, deny himself," and his own fonder appetites, and trace his Master's footsteps, marked out with blood, that he shed for our redemption and restitution. And, that there be no escape from the participation of Christ's suffering, Jesus added this dilemma: "He that will save his life, shall lose it; and he that will lose it, shall save it" to eternity. Which part soever we choose, there is a life to be lost: but as the first are foolish to the extremest misery, that will lose their souls to gain the world; so they are most wise and fortunate, that will give their lives for him; because, when "the Son of Man shall come, in his own glory, and his Father's, and of his angels, he shall reward every man according to his works." This discourse Jesus concluded with a prophecy, that "some, standing" in that presence, "should not die, till they saw the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

11. Of the greater glories of which, in due time to be revealed, "Jesus, after eight days," gave a bright and excellent probation. For, "taking with him Peter, and James, and John, he went up into the mountain Tabor, to pray; and while he prayed, he was transfigured before them, and his garments were white and glistering. And there appeared talking with him Moses and Elias gloriously, speaking of the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem, which glory these apostles, after they had awaked from sleep, did behold." And the interlocutors with Jesus, having finished their embassy of death, (which they delivered in forms of glory, representing the excellences of the reward, together with the sharpness of the passage and interval,) departed, leaving the apostles "full of fear," and wonder, and ecstasy, insomuch that "Peter talked he knew not what;" but nothing amiss, something prophetical, saying, "Master, it is good to be here; let us build three tabernacles." And some devout persons, in memory of the mystery, did erect three churches in the same place, in after ages[b]. But, after the departure of those attendant saints, "a cloud encircled Jesus" and the disciples, "and a voice came from the

[b] Beda de Locis Sanctis, c. 17.

excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, hear him." The cloud quickly disappeared, and freed the disciples from the fear it had put them in. So they attended Jesus, and "descended from the mountain," being "commanded silence," which they observed, "till the resurrection."

12. The next day came to Jesus a man, praying in behalf of his son, "lunatic, and sore troubled with a devil," who sought oft to "destroy him in fire and water[c]," that Jesus would be pleased to deliver him. For his apostles tried, and "could not," by reason of the want of faith; for this grace, if it be true, though in a less degree, is of power to "remove mountains," to pluck up trees by the roots, and to give them solid foundation in the waters. "And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him" from that very hour. Thence Jesus departed privately into Galilee, and in his journey repeated those sadnesses of his approaching passion: which so afflicted the spirits of the disciples, that they durst no more provoke him to discourse, lest he should take occasion to interweave something of that unpleasant argument with it. For sad and disconsolate persons use to create comforts to themselves by fiction of fancy, and use arts of avocation to remove displeasure from them, and stratagems to remove it from their presence, by removing it from their apprehensions, thinking the incommodity of it is then taken away, when they have lost the sense.

13. When Jesus was now come to Capernaum, the exactors of rates came to Simon Peter, asking him if his Master paid the accustomed imposition, viz. a sicle, or didrachm, the fourth part of an ounce of silver, which was the tribute[d] which the Lord imposed upon all the sons of Israel, from twenty years old and above, to pay for redemption and propitiation, and for the use of the tabernacle. "When Peter came into the house, Jesus," knowing the message that he was big with, "prevented him," by asking him, "Of whom do the kings of the nations take tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter answered, Of strangers." Then "said Jesus, then are the children free;" meaning, that since the Gentile kings do not exact tribute of

[c] Sæpe fui sorbendus aquis, sæpe igne vorandus:
Sed timuere tuas ignis et unda manus.

[d] Exod. xxx.

their sons, neither will God of his. And, therefore, this pension, to be paid for the use of the tabernacle, for the service of God, for the redemption of their souls, was not to be paid by him, who was the Son of God, but by strangers. "Yet to avoid offence," he sent Peter a-fishing, and provided a fish with two didrachms of silver in it, which he commanded Peter to pay for them two.

14. But when the disciples were together with "Jesus in the house, he asked them what they discoursed of upon the way;" for they had fallen upon an ambitious and mistaken quarrel, "which of them should be greatest in their Master's kingdom," which they still did dream should be an external and secular royalty, full of fancy and honour. But the Master was diligent to check their forwardness, establishing a rule for clerical deportment: "He that will be greatest among you, let him be your minister:" so supposing a greater and a lesser, a minister, and a person to be ministered unto, but dividing the grandeur of the person from the greatness of office, (that the higher the employment is, the more humble should be the man;) because, in spiritual prelation, it is not as in secular pomps, where the dominion is despotic, the coercion bloody, the dictates imperious, the laws externally compulsory, and the titles arrogant and vain; and all the advantages are so passed upon the person, that, making that first to be splendid, it passes from the person to the subjects, who, in abstracted essences, do not easily apprehend regalities in veneration, but as they are subjected in persons made excellent by such superstructures of majesty: but, in dignities ecclesiastical, the dominion is paternal, the regiment persuasive and argumentative, the coercion by censures immaterial, by cession and consent, by denial of benefits, by the interest of virtues, and the efficacy of hopes, and impresses upon the spirit; the laws are full of admonition and sermon; the titles of honour monitors of duty, and memorials of labour and offices; and all the advantages, which from the office usually pass upon the person, are to be divested by the humility of the man; and, when they are of greatest veneration, they are abstracted excellencies and immaterial, not passing through the person to the people, and reflected to his lustre, but transmitted by his labour and ministry, and give him honour for his labour's sake, (which is his personal

excellency,) not for his honour and title, which is either a derivative from Christ, or from the constitution of pious persons, estimating and valuing the relatives of religion.

15. Then "Jesus taketh a little child, and setteth him in the midst," propounding him, by way of emblem, a pattern of humility and simplicity, without the mixtures of ambition or caitive distempers; such infant candour, and lowliness of spirit, being the necessary port through which we must pass, if we will enter into the courts of heaven. But as a current of wholesome waters, breaking from its restraint, runs out in a succession of waters, and every preceding draught draws out the next: so were the discourses of Jesus excellent and opportune, creating occasions for others, that the whole doctrine of the Gospel, and the entire will of the Father, might be communicated upon design; even the chances of words and actions being made regular and orderly by Divine providence. For, from the instance of humility, in the symbol and hieroglyphic of the child, Jesus discourses of "the care God takes of little children, whether naturally or spiritually such; the danger of doing them scandal and offences; the care and power of their angels guardian; of the necessity in the event that scandals should arise, and of the great woe and infelicity of those persons, who were the active ministers of such offences."

16. But if, in the traverses of our life, discontents and injuries be done, Jesus teaches how the injured person should demean himself[e]: First, reprove the offending party privately; if he repent, forgive him for ever with a mercy as unwearied and as multiplied as his repentance. For the servant, to whom his lord had forgiven ten thousand talents, because he refused to forgive his fellow-servant one hundred pence, was delivered to the tormentors[f], till he should pay

[e] Injuriam qui tulit, oblivisci potest; qui fecit, nunquam.—*Tacit.*

[f] De pœnis debitorum qui solvendo non sunt, vide Livium, Decad. i. lib. i. et vi.; et Dionys. Halicarn. Hist. Rom. lib. vi.; et A. Gellium, lib. xx. c. 1. qui ait, licuisse secare, si vellent, atque partiri corpus debitoris. Eo tamen consilio (sic barbariem excusat Gellius) tanta immanitas pœnæ denunciata est, ne ad eam unquam pervenirent: dissectum esse antiquitus neminem neque legi, neque audivi. Duravit tamen ad ævum Constantini Magni, ut plumbatis cæderentur debitores; qui tandem Christianam mansuetudinem in leges introduxit, et plumbatorum immanitatem sustulit.—*Cod. Theod.* lib. iv. et vii. *de Exact.*

that debt which his lord once forgave, till the servant's impiety forced him to repent his donative and remission. But if he refuses the charity of private correction, let him be reproved before a few witnesses: and in case he be still incorrigible, let him be brought to the tribunal of the church; against whose advices if he shall kick, let him feel her power, and be cut off from the communion of saints, becoming a pagan or a publican. And to make that the church shall not have a dead and ineffectual hand in her animadversions, Jesus promises to all the apostles, what before he promised to Peter, a power of "binding and loosing on earth," and that it should be "ratified in heaven," what they shall so dispose on earth with an unerring key.

17. But John interrupted him, telling him of a stranger that "cast out devils in the name of Jesus," but because he was not of the family, he had "forbidden him." To this Jesus replied, that he should "in no wise have forbidden him," for, in all reason, he would do veneration to that person, whose name he saw to be energetical and triumphant over devils, and in whose name it is almost necessary that man should believe, who used it as an instrument of ejection of impure spirits. Then Jesus proceeded in his excellent sermon and union of discourses, adding holy precepts "concerning offences, which a man might do to himself; in which case he is to be severe, though most gentle to others. For, in his own case, he must show no mercy, but abscission: for it is better to 'cut off the offending hand or foot,' or 'extinguish the offending eye,' rather than, upon the support of a troublesome foot, and by the light of an offending eye, walk into ruin and a sad eternity, 'where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'" And so Jesus ended this chain of excellent discourses.

18. About this time was the Jews' feast of Tabernacles, whither Jesus went up, as it were, in secret; and, passing through Samaria, he found the inhabitants of a little village so inhospitable, as to refuse to give him entertainment; which so provoked the intemperate zeal of James and John, that they would fain have "called for fire to consume them, even as Elias did." But Jesus rebuked the furies of their anger, teaching them to distinguish the spirit of Christianity from the ungentleness of the decretory zeal of Elias. For, since

" the Son of Man came" with a purpose " to seek and save what was lost," it was but an indiscreet temerity, suddenly, upon the lightest umbrages of displeasure, to destroy a man, whose redemption cost the effusion of the dearest blood from the heart of Jesus. But, contrariwise, Jesus does a miracle upon the ten leprous persons, which came to him from the neighbourhood, crying out, with sad exclamations, for help. But Jesus sent them to the priest, to offer for their cleansing. Thither they went, and but one only returned to give thanks, and he a stranger, who, " with a loud voice, glorified God," and with humble adoration worshipped, and gave thanks to Jesus.

19. When Jesus had finished his journey, and was now come to Jerusalem, for the first days he was undiscerned in public conventions, but heard of the various opinions of men concerning him: " some saying he was a good man, others, that he deceived the people;" and the Pharisees sought for him, to do him a mischief. But when they despaired of finding him in the midst of the feast and the people, he made sermons openly, in the midst of the temple; whom when he had convinced, by the variety and divinity of his miracles and discourses, they gave the greatest testimony in the world of human weakness, and how prevalent a prejudice is above the confidence and conviction of a demonstration. For a proverb, a mistake, an error in matter of circumstance, did, in their understandings, outweigh multitudes of miracles and arguments; and because " Christ was of Galilee," because " they knew whence he was," because of the proverb, that " out of Galilee comes no prophet," because " the rulers did not believe in him," these outweighed the demonstrations of his mercy, and his power, and divinity. But yet " very many believed on him; and no man durst lay hands to take him; for as yet his time was not come," in which he meant to give himself up to the power of the Jews: and, therefore, when the Pharisees sent officers to seize him, they also became his disciples, being themselves surprised by the excellency of his doctrine.

20. After this, " Jesus went to the Mount of Olivet," on the east of Jerusalem, and " the next day returned again into the temple," where " the scribes and Pharisees brought him a woman taken in the act of adultery," tempting him to

give sentence, that they might accuse him of severity or intermeddling, if he condemned her; or of remissness and popularity, if he did acquit her. But Jesus found out an expedient for their difficulty, and changed the scene, by bidding "the innocent person among them cast the first stone at the adulteress;" and then "stooping down," to give them fair occasion to withdraw, "he wrote upon the ground with his finger," whilst they left the woman and her crime to a more private censure: "Jesus was left alone, and the woman in the midst;" whom Jesus dismissed, charging her to "sin no more." And, a while after, Jesus begins again to discourse to them, "of his mission from the Father, of his crucifixion and exaltation from the earth, of the reward of believers, of the excellency of truth, of spiritual liberty and relations; who are the sons of Abraham, and who the children of the devil; of his own eternal generation, of the desire of Abraham to see his day." In which sermon he continued, adding still new excellencies, and confuting their malicious and vainer calumnies, till they, that they also might confute him, "took up stones to cast at him;" but he "went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

21. But, in his passage, he met a man who had been born blind: and after he had discoursed cursorily of the cause of that blindness, it being a misery not sent as a punishment to "his own or his parent's sin," but as an occasion to make public "the glory of God;" he, to manifest that himself was "the light of the world" in all senses, said it now, and proved it by a miracle: for, sitting down, "he made clay of spittle," and, "anointing the eyes of the blind man," bade him "go wash in Siloam;" which was a pool of limpid water, which God sent at the prayer of Isaiah the prophet, a little before his death[s], to satisfy the necessities of his people, oppressed with thirst and a strict siege; and it stood at the foot of the Mount Sion, and gave its water at first by returns and periods, always to the Jews, but not to the enemies. And those intermitted springings were still continued, but only a pool was made from the frequent effluxes. The blind man "went, and washed, and returned

[s] Epiphan. de Vita et Interitu Prophet. c. 7.

seeing;" and was incessantly vexed by the Pharisees, to tell them the manner and circumstances of the cure: and when the man had averred the truth, and named his physician, giving him a pious and charitable testimony, the Pharisees, because they could not force him to disavow his good opinion of Jesus, "cast him out of the synagogue." But Jesus, meeting him, received him into the church, told him he was Christ; and the man became again enlightened, and he "believed, and worshipped." But the Pharisees blasphemed: for such was the dispensation of the Divine mysteries, that the blind should see, and they which think they see clearly, should become blind, because they had not the excuse of ignorance to lessen or take off the sin; but, in the midst of light, they shut their eyes, and doted upon darkness, and "therefore did their sin remain."

22. But Jesus continued his sermon among the Pharisees, insinuating reprehensions in his dogmatical discourses, which, like light, shined, and discovered error. For, by discoursing "the properties of a 'good shepherd,' and the lawful way of 'intromission,' he proved them to be 'thieves and robbers,' because they refused to 'enter in by Jesus,' who is 'the door of the sheep;' and, upon the same ground, reproved all those false Christs, which before him usurped the title of Messias; and proved his own vocation and office by an argument, which no other shepherd would use, because he 'laid down his life for his sheep:' others would take the fleece and eat the flesh, but none but himself would die for his sheep; but he would first die, and then gather his 'sheep' together 'into one fold,' (intimating the calling of the Gentiles;) to which purpose he was 'enabled by his Father to lay down his life, and to take it up;' and had also endeared them to his Father, that they should be 'preserved unto eternal life, and no power should be able to take them out of his hand, or the hand of his Father:' for because Jesus was 'united to the Father,' the Father's care preserved the Son's flocks."

23. But the Jews, to requite him for his so divine sermons, betook themselves to their old argument: "they took up stones again to cast at him," pretending he had blasphemed: but Jesus proved it to be no blasphemy to call himself "the Son of God," because "they to whom the

word of God came, are," in Scripture, "called gods." But nothing could satisfy them, whose temporal interest was concerned, not to consent to such doctrine, which would save their souls by ruining their temporal concernments. But when "they sought again to take him, Jesus escaped out of their hands, and went away beyond Jordan, where John at first baptized:" which gave the people occasion to remember that "John did no miracle," but this man does many; and John, whom all men did revere and highly account of, for his office and sanctity, gave testimony to Jesus. "And many believed on him there."

24. After this, Jesus, knowing that "the harvest was great," and as yet the labourers had been few, sent out seventy-two of his disciples, with the like commission as formerly the twelve apostles, that they might "go before to those places, whither himself meant to come." Of which number were the seven, whom afterwards the apostles set over the widows, and Matthias, Mark, and some[h] say Luke, Justus, Barnabas, Apelles, Rufus, Niger, Cephas (not Peter), Thaddæus, Aristion, and John. The rest of the names could not be recovered by the best diligence of Eusebius and Epiphanius. But when they returned from their journey, they rejoiced greatly in the legation and power, and Jesus also "rejoiced in spirit," giving glory to God, that he had "made his revelations to babes" and the more imperfect persons; like the lowest vallies, which receive from heaven the greatest floods of rain and blessings, and stand thick with corn and flowers, when the mountains are unfruitful in their height and greatness.

25. And now a doctor of the law came to Jesus, asking him a question of the greatest consideration that a wise man could ask, or a prophet answer: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus referred him to the Scriptures, and declared the way to heaven to be this only, "to love the Lord with all our powers and faculties, and our neighbour as ourself." But when the lawyer, being captious, made a scruple in a smooth rush, asking what is meant by "neighbour:" Jesus told him, by a parable of a traveller fallen into

[h] Epiphan. Pan. lib. i. tom. 1. Euseb. lib. i. c. 12. Papias, apud Euseb. lib. iii. c. 33.

the hands of robbers, and neglected by a priest and by a Levite, but relieved by a Samaritan, that no distance of country or religion destroys the relation of neighbourhood; but every person, with whom we converse in peace and charity, is that neighbour, whom we are to love as ourselves.

26. Jesus, having departed from Jerusalem upon the forementioned danger, came to a village called Bethany, where Martha, making great and busy preparation for his entertainment, to express her joy and her affections to his person, desired Jesus to dismiss her sister Mary from his feet, who sate there feasting herself with the viands and sweetnesses of his doctrine, incurious of the provisions for entertainment. But Jesus commended her choice; and though he did not expressly disrepute Martha's civility, yet he preferred Mary's religion and sanctity of affections. In this time (because "the night drew on, in which no man could work,") Jesus hastened to do his Father's business, and to pour out whole cataracts of holy lessons, like the fruitful Nilus swelling over the banks, and filling all the trenches, to make a plenty of corn and fruits great as the inundation. Jesus therefore teaches his disciples "that form of prayer, the second time, which we call 'the Lord's Prayer:' teaches them assiduity and indefatigable importunity in prayer, by a parable of an importunate neighbour borrowing loaves at midnight, and a troublesome widow, who forced an unjust judge to do her right by her clamorous and hourly addresses: encourages them to pray, by consideration of the Divine goodness and fatherly affection, far more indulgent to his sons than natural fathers are to their dearest issue; and adds a gracious promise of success to them that pray. He reproves Pharisaical ostentation; arms his disciples against the fear of men and the terrors of persecution, which can arrive but to the incommodities of the body; teaches the fear of God, who is Lord of the whole man, and can accurse the soul, as well as punish the body. He refuses to divide the inheritance between two brethren, as not having competent power to become lord in temporal jurisdictions. He preaches against covetousness, and the placing felicities in worldly possessions, by a parable of a rich man, whose riches were too big for his barns, and big enough for his soul, and he ran over into voluptuousness, and stupid complacencies in his perishing goods: he was

snatched from their possession, and his soul taken from him; in the violence of a rapid and hasty sickness, in the space of one night. He discourses of Divine providence and care over us all, and descending even as low as grass. He exhorts to alms-deeds, to watchfulness, and preparation against the sudden and unexpected coming of our Lord to judgment, or the arrest of death: tells the offices and sedulity of the clergy, under the apologue of stewards and governors of their Lord's houses; teaches them gentleness and sobriety, and not to do evil upon confidence of their Lord's absence and delay; and teaches the people, even of themselves, to judge what is right concerning the signs of the coming of the Son of Man. And the end of all these discourses was, that all men should repent, and live good lives, and be saved."

27. At this sermon "there were present some, that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices." For the Galileans were a sort of people, that taught it to be unlawful to pay tribute to strangers, or to pray for the Romans; and because the Jews did both, they refused to communicate in their sacred rites, and would sacrifice apart: at which solemnity, when Pilate, the Roman deputy, had apprehended many of them, he caused them all to be slain, making them to die upon the same altars. These were of the province of Judea, but of the same opinion with those who taught in Galilee, from whence the sect had its appellative. But to the story: Jesus made reply, that these external accidents, though they be sad and calamitous, yet they are no arguments of condemnation against the persons of the men, to convince them of a greater guilt than others, upon whom no such visible signatures have been imprinted. The purpose of such chances is, that we should "repent, lest we perish" in the like judgment.

28. About this time a certain ruler of a synagogue renewed the old question about the observation of the Sabbath, repining at Jesus, that he cured "a woman that was crooked, loosing her from her infirmity, with which she had been afflicted eighteen years." But Jesus made the man ashamed, by an argument from their own practice, who themselves "loose an ox from the stall on the Sabbath, and lead him to watering:" and by the same argument he also stopped the

mouths of the Scribes and Pharisees, which were open upon him, for curing an hydropic person upon the Sabbath. For Jesus, that he might draw off and separate Christianity from the yoke of ceremonies, by abolishing and taking off the strictest Mosaical rites, chose to do very many of his miracles upon the Sabbath, that he might do the work of abrogation and institution, both at once; not much unlike the sabbatical pool in Judea, which was dry six days, but gushed out in a full stream upon the Sabbath[1]. For though, upon all days, Christ was operative and miraculous, yet many reasons did concur and determine him to a more frequent working upon those days of public ceremony and convention. But, going forth from thence, he went up and down the cities of Galilee, re-enforcing the same doctrine he had formerly taught them, and daily adding new precepts, and cautions, and prudent insinuations: "advertizing of the multitudes of them that perish, and the paucity of them that shall be saved, and that we should 'strive to enter in at the strait gate;' that 'the way to destruction is broad' and plausible, 'the way to heaven' nice and austere, 'and few there be that find it:' teaches them modesty at feasts, and entertainments of the poor: discourses of the many excuses and unwillingnesses of persons who were invited to the feast of the kingdom, the refreshments of the Gospel; and tacitly insinuates the rejection of the Jews, who were the first 'invited,' and the calling of the Gentiles, who were the persons 'called in from the highways and hedges.' He reprehends Herod for his subtilty and design to kill him; prophesies that he should die at Jerusalem; and intimates great sadnesses future to them, for 'neglecting this, their day' of visitation, and for 'killing the prophets and the messengers sent from God.'"

29. It now grew towards winter, and the Jews' feast of Dedication was at hand; therefore, Jesus went up to Jerusalem to the feast, where he preached in Solomon's porch, which part of the temple stood entire from the first ruins: and the end of his sermon was, that the Jews had like to have stoned him. But, retiring from thence, he went beyond Jordan, where he taught the people, in a most

[1] Joseph. de Bello Jud. lib. vii. c. 24.

elegant and persuasive parable, concerning "the mercy of God in accepting penitents, in the parable of the 'prodigal son' returning; discourses of the design of the Messias coming into the world, to recover erring persons from their sin and danger, in the apologues of the 'lost sheep,' and 'groat;' and, under the representment of an unjust, but prudent, steward, he taught us so to employ our present opportunities and estates, by laying them out in acts of mercy and religion, that, when our souls shall be dismissed from the stewardship and custody of our body, we 'may be entertained in everlasting habitations.' He instructeth the Pharisees in the question of divorces, limiting the permissions of separations to the only cause of fornication: preferreth holy celibate before the estate of marriage, in them to whom the gift of continency is given, in order to the kingdom of heaven. He telleth a story, or a parable, (for which is uncertain,) of a a rich man (whom Euthymius, out of the tradition of the Hebrews, nameth Nymensis,) and Lazarus; the first a voluptuous person, and uncharitable; the other, pious, afflicted, sick, and a beggar: the first died, and went to hell; the second, to Abraham's bosom: God so ordering the dispensation of good things, that we cannot easily enjoy two heavens; nor shall the infelicities of our lives, if we be pious, end otherwise than in a beatified condition. The epilogue of which story discovered this truth also, that the ordinary means of salvation are the express revelations of Scripture, and the ministries of God's appointment; and whosoever neglects these, shall not be supplied with means extraordinary, or, if he were, they would be totally ineffectual."

30. And still the people drew water from the fountains of our Saviour, which streamed out in a full and continual emanation. For, adding wave to wave, "line to line, precept upon precept," he "reproved the fastidiousness of the Pharisee, that came with eucharist to God, and contempt to his brother; and commended the humility of the publican's address, who came deploring his sins, and, with modesty, and penance, and importunity, begged, and obtained a mercy. Then he laid hands upon certain young children, and gave them benediction, charging his apostles to admit infants to him, because to them, in persom, and to such, in emblem and signification, the kingdom of heaven does appertain.

He instructs a young man in the ways and counsels of perfection, besides the observation of precepts, by heroical renunciations, and acts of munificent charity." Which discourse, because it alighted upon an indisposed and an unfortunate subject, (" for the young man was very rich;") Jesus discourses " how hard it is for a rich man to be saved; but he expounds himself to mean, ' they that trust in riches;' and, however it is a matter of so great temptation, that it is almost impossible to escape, yet, ' with God nothing is impossible.' " But, when the apostles heard the Master bidding the young man " sell all, and give to the poor, and follow him," and, for his reward, promised him " a heavenly treasure;" Peter, in the name of the rest, began to think that this was their case, and the promise also might concern them: but they asked the question, What shall we have, who have forsaken all, and followed thee? Jesus answered, that they should " sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

31. And Jesus extended this mercy to every disciple, that should " forsake either house, or wife, or children, or any thing, for his sake and the Gospel's," and that they " should receive a hundredfold in this life," by way of comfort and equivalence, " and, in the world to come," thousands of glories and possessions, in fruition and redundancy. For " they that are last shall be first, and the first shall be last:" and the despised people of this world shall reign like kings, and contempt itself shall swell up into glory, and poverty into an eternal satisfaction. And these rewards shall not be accounted according to the privileges of nations, or priority of vocation, but readiness of mind and obedience, and sedulity of operation after calling: which Jesus taught his disciples in the parable of the " labourers in the vineyard," to whom the master gave the same reward, though the times of their working were different; as their calling and employment had determined the opportunity of their labours.

DISCOURSE XVII.

Of Scandal, or giving and taking Offence[a].

1. A SAD curse being threatened, in the Gospel, to them who "offend any of Christ's little ones," that is, such as are novices and babes in Christianity, it concerns us to learn our duty, and perform it, that we may avoid the curse; for, "Woe to all them, by whom offences come[b]." And, although the duty is so plainly explicated, and represented in gloss and case, by the several commentaries of St. Paul, upon this menace of our blessed Saviour[c]; yet, because our English word "offence," which is commonly used in this question of scandal, is so large and equivocal, that it hath made many pretences, and intricated this article to some inconvenience, it is not without good purpose to draw into one body those propositions, which the masters of spiritual life have described in the managing of this question.

2. First: By whatsoever we do our duty to God, we cannot directly do offence, or give scandal, to our brother; because, in such cases where God hath obliged us, he hath also obliged himself to reconcile our duty to the designs of God, to the utility of souls, and the ends of charity. And this proposition is to be extended to our obedience to the lawful constitutions of our competent superiors, in which cases we are to look upon the commandment, and leave the accidental events to the disposition of that Providence, who reconciles dissonances in nature, and concentres all the variety of accidents into his own glory. And whosoever is offended at me for obeying God, or God's vicegerent, is offended at me for doing my duty; and in this there is no more dispute, but whether I shall displease God, or my peevish neighbour. These are such, whom the Spirit of God complains of, under other representments: they "think it strange we run not into the same excess of riot;" their "eye is evil, because" their Master's "eye is good;" and the abounding of God's grace also may become to them an occasion of falling, and the long-suffering of God the en-

[a] Ad Num. 3. [b] Matt. xviii. 7.
[c] Rom. xiv. 1 Cor. viii. Gal. ii.

couragement to sin. In this there is no difficulty: for in what case soever we are bound to obey God, or man, in that case, and in that conjunction of circumstances, we have nothing permitted to our choice, and have no authority to remit of the right of God, or our superior. And, to comply with our neighbour in such questions, besides that it cannot serve any purposes of piety, if it declines from duty in any instance, it is like giving alms out of the portion of orphans, or building hospitals with the money and spoils of sacrilege. It is pusillanimity, or hypocrisy, or a denying to confess Christ before men, to comply with any man, and to offend God, or omit a duty. Whatsoever is necessary to be done, and is made so by God, no weakness or peevishness of man can make necessary not to be done. For the matter of scandal is a duty beneath the prime obligations of religion.

3. Secondly: But every thing which is used in religion, is not matter of precise duty; but there are some things, which indeed are pious and religious, but dispensable, voluntary, and commutable; such as are, voluntary fasts, exterior acts of discipline and mortification, not enjoined, great degrees of exterior worship, prostration, long prayers, vigils: and in these things, although there is not directly a matter of scandal, yet there may be some prudential considerations in order to charity and edification. By pious actions, I mean either particular pursuances of a general duty, which are uncommanded in the instance, such as are the minutes and expresses of alms; or else they are commended, but in the whole kind of them unenjoined, such as divines call the "counsels of perfection." In both these cases, a man cannot be scandalous. For the man doing, in charity and the love of God, such actions which are aptly expressive of love, the man, I say, is not uncharitable in his purposes; and the actions themselves, being either attempts or proceedings toward perfection, or else actions of direct duty, are as innocent in their productions as in themselves, and, therefore, without the malice of the recipient, cannot induce him into sin: and nothing else is scandal. To do any pious act proceeds from the Spirit of God, and to give scandal, from the spirit of malice, or indiscretion; and, therefore, a pious action, whose fountain is love and wisdom, cannot end in uncharitableness or imprudence. But, because, when any

man is offended at what I esteem piety, there is a question whether the action be pious or not: therefore, it concerns him that works, to take care that his action be either an act of duty, though not determined to a certain particular; or else, be something counselled in Scripture, or practised by a holy person, there recorded, and nowhere reproved; or a practice warranted by such precedents, which modest, prudent, and religious persons account a sufficient inducement of such particulars: for he that proceeds upon such principles, derives the warrant of his actions from beginnings, which secure the particular, and quits the scandal.

4. This, I say, is a security against the uncharitableness and the sin of scandal; because a zeal of doing pious actions is a zeal according to God: but it is not always a security against the indiscretion of the scandal. He that reproves a foolish person in such circumstances that provoke him, or make him impudent or blasphemous, does not give scandal, and brings no sin upon himself, though he occasioned it in the other: but, if it was probable such effects would be consequent to the reprehension, his zeal was imprudent and rash; but so long as it was zeal for God, and, in its own matter, lawful, it could not be an active or guilty scandal: but if it be no zeal, and be a design to entrap a man's unwariness, or passion, or shame, and to disgrace the man, by that means, or any other, to make him sin, then it is directly the offending of our brother. They that "preached Christ out of envy," intended to do offence to the apostles: but, because they were impregnable, the sin rested in their own bosom, and God wrought his own ends by it. And, in this sense, they are scandalous persons, who "fast for strife," who pray for rebellion, who entice simple persons into the snare, by colours of religion. Those very exterior acts of piety become an offence, because they are done to evil purposes; to abuse proselytes, and to draw away disciples after them, and make them love the sin, and march under so splendid and fair colours. They who, out of strictness and severity of persuasion, represent the conditions of the Gospel alike to every person, that is, nicer than Christ described them, in all circumstances, and deny such liberties of exterior desires and complacency, which may be reasonably permitted to some men, do very indiscreetly, and may occasion the

alienation of some men's minds from the entertainments of religion: but this being accidental to the thing itself, and to the purpose of the man, is not the sin of scandal, but it is the indiscretion of scandal, if, by such means, he divorces any man's mind from the cohabitation and unions of religion: and yet, if the purpose of the man be to affright weaker and unwise persons, it is a direct scandal, and one of those ways which the devil uses toward the peopling of his kingdom; it is a plain laying of a snare to entrap feeble and uninstructed souls.

5. But if the pious action have been formerly joined with any thing that is truly criminal, with idolatry, with superstition, with impious customs or impure rites, and by retaining the piety, I give cause to my weak brother to think I approve of the old appendage, and, by my reputation, invite him to swallow the whole action without discerning; the case is altered: I am to omit that pious action, if it be not under command, until I have acquitted it from the suspicion of evil company. But when I have done what, in prudence, I guess sufficient to thaw the frost of jealousy, and to separate those dissonances, which formerly seemed united, I have done my duty of charity, by endeavouring to free my brother from the snare, and I have done what, in Christian prudence, I was obliged, when I have protested against the appendant crime: if, afterwards, the same person shall entertain the crime, upon pretence of my example, who have plainly disavowed it, he lays the snare for himself, and is glad of the pretence, or will, in spite, enter into the net, that he might think it reasonable to rail at me. I may not, with Christian charity or prudence, wear the picture of our blessed Lord in rings or medals [d], though with great affection and designs of doing him all the honour that I can, if, by such pictures, I invite persons, apt more to follow me than to understand me, to give divine honour to a picture: but when I have declared my hatred of superstitious worshippings, and given my brother warning of the snare, which his own mistake, or the devil's malice, was preparing for him, I may then, without danger, signify my piety and affections

[d] Ἐν δακτύλῳ Θεοῦ εἰκόνα μὴ περιφέρειν, dictum proverbialiter, contra leves et inanes ceremonias civilis et popularis religionis.

in any civil representments, which are not against God's law or the customs of the church, or the analogy of faith. And there needs no other reason to be given for this rule, than that there is no reason to be given against it. If the nature of the thing be innocent, and the purpose of the man be pious, and he hath used his moral industry to secure his brother against accidental mischances and abuses; his duty, in this particular, can have no more parts and instances.

6. But it is too crude an assertion, to affirm indefinitely, that whatsoever hath been abused to evil or superstitious purposes, must presently be abjured, and never entertained, for fear of scandal: for it is certain, that the best things have been most abused. Have not some persons used certain verses of the Psalter, as an antidote against the toothache? and carried the blessed sacrament in pendants about their necks, as a charm to countermand witches? and St. John's Gospel, as a spell against wild beasts, and wilder untamed spirits? Confession of sins to the ministers of religion hath been made an instrument to serve base ends; and so, indeed, hath all religion been abused: and some persons have been so receptive of scandal, that they suspected all religion to be a mere stratagem, because they have observed very many men have used it so. For some natures are like sponges or sugar, whose utmost verge if you dip in wine, it drowns itself by the moisture it sucks up, and is drenched all over, receiving its alteration from within; its own nature did the mischief, and plucks on its own dissolution. And these men are greedy to receive a scandal; and when it is presented but in small instances, they suck it up to the dissolution of their whole religion; being glad of a quarrel, that their impieties may not want all excuse. But yet, it is certainly very unreasonable to reject excellent things, because they have been abused; as if separable accidents had altered natures and essences, or that they resolve never to forgive the duties, for having once fallen into the hands of unskilful or malicious persons. Hezekiah took away the brazen serpent, because the people abused it to idolatry; but the serpent had long before lost its use: and yet, if the people had not been a peevish, and refractory, and superstitious people, in whose nature it was to take all occasions of superstition; and farther yet, if the taking away such occasions and opportunities of

that sin in special, had not been most agreeable with the designs of God, in forbidding to the people the common use of all images in the second commandment, which was given them after the erection of that brazen statue; Hezekiah possibly would not, or at least had not, been bound to have destroyed that monument of an old story and a great blessing, but have sought to separate the abuse from the minds of men, and retained the image. But in Christianity, when none of these circumstances occur, where, by the greatness and plenty of revelations, we are more fully instructed in the ways of duty; and when the thing itself is pious, and the abuse very separable, it is infinite disparagement to us, or to our religion, either that our religion is not sufficient to cure an abuse, or that we will never part with it; but we must unpardonably reject a good, because it had once upon it a crust or spot of leprosy, though, since, it hath been washed in the waters of reformation. The primitive Christians abstained from actions of themselves indifferent, which the unconverted people used, if those actions were symbolical, or adopted into false religions, or not well understood by those they were bound to satisfy: but when they had washed off the accrescences of Gentile superstition, they chose such rites which their neighbours used, and had designs not imprudent or unhandsome; and they were glad of heathen temples, to celebrate the Christian rites in them, and they made no other change, but that they ejected the devil, and invited their Lord into the possession.

7. Thirdly: In things merely indifferent, whose practice is not limited by command, nor their nature heightened by an appendant piety, we must use our liberty so as may not offend our brother, or lead him into a sin directly or indirectly. For scandal being directly against charity, it is to be avoided in the same measure, and by the same proportions, in which charity is to be pursued. Now we must so use ourselves, that we must cut off a foot, or pluck out an eye, rather than the one should bear us, and the other lead us, to sin and death; we must rather rescind all the natural and sensual, or dearest invitations to vice, and deny ourselves lawful things, than that lawful things should betray us to unlawful actions. And this rule is the measure of charity: our neighbour's soul ought to be dearer unto us than any

temporal privilege. It is lawful for me to eat herbs, or fish, and to observe an ascetic diet: but if, by such austerities, I lead others to a good opinion of Montanism, or the practices of Pythagoras, or to believe flesh to be impure, I must rather alter my diet, than teach him to sin by mistaking me. St. Paul gave an instance of eating flesh, sold in the shambles, from the idol-temples: to eat it, in the relation of an idol-sacrifice, is a great sin; but when it is sold in the shambles, the property is altered to them that understand it so. But yet, even this Paul would not do, if, by so doing, he should encourage undiscerning people to eat all meat conveyed from the temple, and offered to devils. It is not in every man's head to distinguish formalities, and to make abstractions of purpose from exterior acts; and to alter their devotions, by new relations and respects, depending upon intellectual and metaphysical notions. And, therefore, it is not safe to do an action which is not lawful, but after the making distinctions, before ignorant and weaker persons, who swallow down the bole and the box that carries it, and never pare their apple, or take the core out. If I, by the law of charity, must rather quit my own goods, than suffer my brother to perish; much rather must I quit my privilege, and those superstructures of favour and grace, which Christ hath given me beyond my necessities, than wound the spirit and destroy the soul of a weak man, "for whom Christ died." It is an inordinate affection, to love my own ease, and circumstances of pleasure, before the soul of a brother; and such a thing are the privileges of Christian liberty: for Christ hath taken off from us the restraints, which God had laid upon the Jews, in meat and holy-days; but these are but circumstances of grace, given us for opportunities, and cheap instances of charity. We should ill die for our brother, who will not lose a meal to prevent his sin, or change a dish to save his soul. And if the thing be indifferent to us, yet it ought not to be indifferent to us, whether our brother live or die.

8. Fourthly: And yet we must not, to please peevish or froward people, betray our liberty which Christ hath given us. If any man opposes the lawfulness and license of indifferent actions, or be disturbed at my using my privileges innocently; in the first case, I am bound to use them still; in the second, I am not bound to quit them, to please him.

For, in the first instance, he that shall cease to use his liberty, to please him that says his liberty is unlawful, encourages him that says so in his false opinion, and, by complying with him, gives the scandal; and he who is angry with me for making use of it, is a person that, it may be, is "crept in, to spy out" and invade "my liberty," but not apt to be reduced into sin by that act of mine, which he detests, for which he despises me, and so makes my person unapt to be exemplar to him. To be angry with me, for doing what Christ hath allowed me, and which is part of the liberty he purchased for me, when he took upon himself the form of a servant, is to judge me, and to be uncharitable to me: and he that does so, is beforehand with me, and upon the active part: he does the scandal to me, and, by offering to deprive me of my liberty, he makes my way to heaven narrower and more encumbered than Christ left it, and so places a stumbling-stone in my way; I put none in his. And if such peevishness and discontent of a brother engages me to a new and unimposed yoke, then it were in the power of my enemy, or any malevolent person, to make me never to keep festival, or never to observe any private fast; never to be prostrate at my prayers, nor to do any thing but according to his leave; and his humour shall become the rule of my actions; and then my charity to him shall be the greatest uncharitableness in the world to myself, and his liberty shall be my bondage. Add to this, that such complying and obeying the peevishness of discontented persons, is to no end of charity: for besides that such concessions never satisfy persons who are unreasonably angry; because, by the same reason, they may demand more, as they ask this, for which they had no reason at all. It also encourages them to be peevish, and gives fuel to the passion, and feeds the wolf; and so encourages the sin, and prevents none.

9. Fifthly: For he only gives scandal, who induces his brother directly or collaterally into sin, as appears by all the discourses in Scripture guiding us in this duty; and it is called "laying a stumbling-block in our brother's way, a wounding the conscience of our weak brother[e]." Thus

[e] 1 Cor. viii. 10, 12. Rom. xiv. 21. Matth. v. 29. xiii. 57. Mark, xiv. 27. vi. 3. iv. 17. Luke, vii. 23. John, xvi. 1.

Balaam was said to lay a scandal before the sons of Israel, by tempting them to fornication with the daughters of Moab. Every evil example, or imprudent, sinful, and unwary deportment, is a scandal; because it invites others to do the like, leading them by the hand, taking off the strangeness and insolency of the act, which deters many men from entertaining it; and it gives some offers of security to others, that they shall escape as we have done; besides that it is in the nature of all agents, natural and moral, to assimilate, either by proper efficiency, or by counsel and moral invitements, others to themselves. But this is a direct scandal: and such it is, to give money to an idle person, who you know will be drunk with it; or to invite an intemperate person to an opportunity of excess, who desires it always, but without thee wants it. Indirectly and accidentally, but very criminally, they give scandal, who introduce persons into a state of life, from whence, probably, they pass into a state of sin. So did the Israelites, who married their daughters to the idolatrous Moabites; and so do they, who intrust a pupil to a vicious guardian. For, although God can preserve children in the midst of flames, without scorching; yet if they singe their hair, or scorch their flesh, they that put them in, are guilty of the burning. And yet, farther, if persons so exposed to danger should escape by miracle, yet they escape not, who expose them to the danger. They who threw the children of the captivity into the furnace, were burnt to death, though the children were not hurt: and the very offering a person in our trust, to a certain or probable danger, foreseen and understood, is a likely way to pass sin upon the person so exposed, but a certain way to contract it in ourelves; it is directly against charity, for no man loves a soul, unless he loves its safety; and he cares not to have his child safe, that throws him into the fire. Hither are to be reduced all false doctrines, aptly productive of evil life; the doctrines are scandalous, and the men guilty, if they understand the consequents of their own propositions: or if they think it probable, that persons will be led by such doctrines into evil persuasions, though themselves believe them not to be necessary products of their opinions; yet the very publishing such opinions, which, of themselves not being necessary, or otherwise very profitable, are apt to be understood, by weak per-

sons at least, to ill ends, is against charity, and the duty we owe to our brother's soul.

10. Sixthly: It is not necessary for ever to abstain from things indifferent, to prevent the offending of a brother; but only till I have taken away that rock, against which some did stumble, or have done my endeavour to remove it. In questions of religion, it is lawful to use primitive and ancient words, at which men have been weakened and seem to stumble, when the objection is cleared, and the ill consequents and suspicion disavowed: and it may be of good use, charity, and edification, to speak the language of the purest ages, although that some words were used also in the impurest ages, and descended along, upon changing and declining articles; when it is rightly explicated, in what sense the best men did innocently use them, and the same sense is now protested. But, in this case, it concerns prudence to see, that the benefit be greater than the danger. And the same, also, is to be said concerning all the actions and parts of Christian liberty. For if, after I have removed the unevenness and objection of the accident; that is, if when I have explained my disrelish to the crime, which might possibly be gathered up and taken into practice by my misunderstood example, still any man will stumble and fall,—it is a resolution to fall, a love of danger, a peevishness of spirit, a voluntary misunderstanding; it is not a misery in the man, more than it is his own fault: and whenever the cause of any sin becomes criminal to the man that sins, it is certain, that if the other, who was made the occasion, did disavow and protest against the crime, the man that sins, is the only guilty person, both in the effect and cause too; for the other could do no more but use a moral and prudent industry, to prevent a being misinterpreted; and if he were tied to more, he must quit his interest for ever in a perpetual scruple; and it is like taking away all laws to prevent disobedience, and making all even, to secure the world against the effects of pride or stubbornness. I add to this, that since actions, indifferent in their own natures, are not productive of effects and actions criminal, it is merely by accident that men are abused into a sin; that is, by weakness, by misconceit, by something that either discovers malice or indiscretion; which, because the act itself does not of itself, if the man does not voluntarily or by inten-

tion, the sin dwells nowhere but with the man that entertains it: the man is no longer weak than he is mistaken, and he is not mistaken or abused into the sin, by example of any man who hath rightly stated his own question, and divorced the suspicion of the sin from his action; whatsoever comes after this, is not weakness of understanding, but strength of passion; and he that is "always learning, and never comes to the knowledge of the truth," is something besides a silly man. Men cannot be always "babes in Christ[f]," without their own fault; they are no longer "Christ's little ones," than they are inculpably ignorant. For it is but a mantle cast over pride and frowardness, to think ourselves able to teach others, and yet pretend offence and scandal; to scorn to be instructed, and yet complain that we are offended, and led into sin for want of knowledge of our duty. He that understands his duty, is not a person capable of scandal by things indifferent. And it is certain, that no man can say, concerning himself, that he is scandalized at another; that is, that he is led into sin by mistake and weakness; for if himself knows it, the mistake is gone. Well may the guides of their souls complain, concerning such persons, that their sin is procured by offending persons or actions; but he that complains concerning himself, to the same purpose, pretends ignorance for other ends, and contradicts himself by his complaint and knowledge of his error. The boy was prettily peevish, who, when his father bade him pronounce Thalassius, told him he could not pronounce Thalassius, at the same time speaking the word: just so impotent, weak, and undiscerning a person is that, who would forbid me to do an indifferent action, upon pretence that it makes him ignorantly sin; for his saying so confutes his ignorance, and argues him of a worse folly: it is like asking my neighbour, whether such an action be done against my own will.

11. Seventhly: When an action is apt to be mistaken to contrary purposes, it concerns the prudence and charity of a Christian, to use such compliance, as best co-operates to God's glory, and hath in it the less danger. The apostles gave an instance in the matter of circumcision, in which they walked warily, and with variety of design, that they might

[f] Ἀσθενεῖς τῇ πίστει. Rom. xiv. 1. 1 Cor. viii. 10, 12.

invite the Gentiles to the easy yoke of Christianity, and yet not deter the Jew, by a disrespect of the law of Moses. And, therefore, St. Paul circumcised Timothy, because he was among the Jews, and descended from a Jewish parent; and in the instance, gave sentence, in compliance with the Jewish persuasion, because Timothy might well be accounted for a Jew by birth; unto them the rites of Moses were for a while permitted. But when Titus was brought upon the scene of a mixed assembly, and was no Jew, but a Greek, to whom Paul had taught "they ought not to be circumcised[s];" although some Jews watched what he would do, yet he plainly refused to circumcise him, choosing rather to leave the Jews angry, than the Gentiles scandalized, or led into an opinion that circumcision was necessary, or that he had taught them otherwise out of collateral ends, or that now he did so. But when a case of Christian liberty happened to St. Peter, he was not so prudent in his choice; but, at the coming of certain Jews from Jerusalem, withdrew himself from the society of the Gentiles; not considering, that it was worse if the Gentiles, who were invited to Christianity by the sweetness of its liberty and compliance, should fall back, when they that taught them the excellency of Christian liberty, durst not stand to it, than if those Jews were displeased at Christianity, for admitting Gentiles into its communion, after they had been instructed that God had broken down the partition-wall, and made them one sheepfold. It was of greater concernment to God's glory, to gain the Gentiles, than to retain the Jews; and yet if it had not, the apostles were bound to bend to the inclinations of the weaker, rather than be mastered by the wilfulness of the stronger, who had been sufficiently instructed in the articles of Christian liberty, and in the adopting the Gentiles into the family of God. Thus, if it be a question, whether I should abate any thing of my external religion or ceremonies, to satisfy an heretic or a contentious person, who pretends scandal to himself, and is, indeed, of another persuasion; and at the same time I know, that good persons would be weakened at such forbearance, and estranged from the good persuasion and charity of communion, which is part of their duty; it more

[s] Gal. ii. 3, 4, &c.

concerns charity and the glory of God, that I secure the right, than twine about the wrong, wilful, and malicious persons. A prelate must rather fortify and encourage obedience, and strengthen discipline, than by remissness toward refractory spirits, and a desire not to seem severe, weaken the hands of conscientious persons, by taking away the marks of difference between them that obey and them that obey not: and in all cases, when the question is between a friend to be secured from apostacy, or an enemy to be gained from indifferency, St. Paul's rule is to be observed: "Do good to all, but especially to the household of faith." When the church, in a particular instance, cannot be kind to both, she must first love her own children.

12. Eighthly: But when the question is between pleasing and contenting the fancies of a friend, and the gaining of an enemy, the greater good of the enemy is infinitely to be preferred, before the satisfying the unnecessary humour of the friend; and, therefore, that we may gain persons of a different religion, it is lawful to entertain them in their innocent customs; that we may represent ourselves charitable and just, apt to comply in what we can, and yet for no end complying farther than we are permitted. It was a policy of the devil, to abuse Christians to the rites of Mithra, by imitating the Christian ceremonies; and the Christians themselves were beforehand with him in that policy; for they facilitated the reconcilement of Judaism with Christianity, by common rites, and invited the Gentiles to the Christian churches, because they never violated the heathen temples, but loved the men, and imitated their innocent rites, and only offered to reform their errors, and hallow their abused purposes: and this, if it had no other contradictory or unhandsome circumstance, gave no offence to other Christians, when they had learned to trust them with the government of ecclesiastical affairs, to whom God had committed them; and they all had the same purposes of religion and charity. And when there is no objection against this, but the furies or greater heats of a mistaken zeal, the compliance with evil or unbelieving persons, to gain them from their errors to the ways of truth and sincerity, is great prudence and great charity; because it chooses and acts a greater good, at no other charge or expense but the discomposing of an intemperate zeal.

13. Ninthly: We are not bound to intermit a good or a lawful action, as soon as any man tells us it is scandalous, (for that may be an easy stratagem to give me laws, and destroy my liberty:) but either when the action is of itself, or by reason of a public known indisposition of some persons, probably introductive of a sin; or when we know it is so in fact. The other is but affrighting a man; this only is prudent, that my charity be guided by such rules, which determine wise men to actions or omissions respectively. And, therefore, a light fame is not strong enough to wrest my liberty from me; but a reasonable belief, or a certain knowledge, in the taking of which estimate we must neither be too credulous and easy, nor yet ungentle and stubborn, but do according to the actions of wise men and the charities of a Christian. Hither we may refer the rules of abstaining from things, which are of evil report. For not every thing which is of good report, is to be followed; for then a false opinion, when it is become popular, must be professed for conscience sake; nor yet every thing that is of bad report, is to be avoided; for nothing endured more shame and obloquy than Christianity, at its first commencement. But by "good report," we are to understand such things, which are well reported of by good men and wise men, or Scripture, or the consent of nations. And thus, for a woman to marry within the year of mourning is scandalous; because it is of evil report, gives suspicion of lightness, or some worse confederacy, before the death of her husband. The thing itself is apt to minister the suspicion, and this we are bound to prevent; and unless the suspicion be malicious, or imprudent and unreasonable, we must conceal our actions from the surprises and deprehensions of suspicion. It was scandalous amongst the old Romans not to marry; among the Christians, for a clergyman to marry twice, because it was against an apostolical canon: but when it became of ill report for any Christian to marry the second time, because this evil report was begun by the errors of Montanus, and is against a permission of holy Scripture, no lay Christian was bound to abstain from a second bed, for fear of giving scandal.

14. Tenthly: The precept of avoiding scandal concerns the governors of the church or state, in the making and execution of laws. For no law in things indifferent ought to

be made to the provocation of the subject, or against that public disposition, which is in the spirits of men; and will, certainly, cause perpetual irregularities and schisms. Before the law be made, the superior must comply with the subject; after it is made, the subject must comply with the law. But in this, the church hath made fair provision, accounting no laws obligatory, till the people have accepted them, and given tacit approbation: for ecclesiastical canons have their time of probation; and if they become a burden to the people, or occasion schisms, tumults, public disunion of affections, and jealousies against authority, the laws give place, and either fix not when they are not first approved, or disappear by desuetude. And in the execution of laws, no less care is to be taken; for many cases occur, in which the laws can be rescued from being a snare to men's consciences, by no other way but by dispensation, and slacking of the discipline as to certain particulars. Mercy and sacrifice, the letter and the spirit, the words and the intention, the general case and the particular exception, the present disposition and the former state of things, are oftentimes so repugnant, and of such contradictory interests, that there is no stumbling-block more troublesome or dangerous, than a severe literal and rigorous exacting of laws in all cases. But when stubbornness, or a contentious spirit, when rebellion and pride, when secular interest, or ease and licentiousness, set men up against the laws, the laws then are upon the defensive, and ought not to give place. It is ill to cure particular disobedience, by removing a constitution, decreed by public wisdom, for a general good. When the evil occasioned by the law is greater than the good designed, or than the good which will come by it in the present constitution of things, and the evil can by no other remedy be healed, it concerns the lawgiver's charity to take off such positive constitutions, which in the authority are merely human, and in the matter indifferent, and evil in the event. The sum of this whole duty I shall choose to represent, in the words of an excellent person, St. Jerome: "We must, for the avoiding of scandal, quit every thing which may be omitted, without prejudice to the threefold truth, of life, of justice, and doctrine:" meaning, that what is not expressly commanded by God or our superiors, or what is not expressly commended as an act of piety and perfection,

or what is not an obligation of justice; that is, in which the interest of a third person, or else our own Christian liberty, is not totally concerned, all that is to be given in sacrifice to mercy, and to be made matter of edification and charity, but not of scandal; that is, of danger, and sin, and falling, to our neighbour.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, who art made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, give us of thy abundant charity; that we may love the eternal benefit of our brother's soul, with a true, diligent, and affectionate care and tenderness. Give us a fellow-feeling of one another's calamities, a readiness to bear each other's burdens, aptness to forbear, wisdom to advise, counsel to direct, and a spirit of meekness and modesty trembling at our infirmities, fearful in our brother's dangers, and joyful in his restitution and securities. Lord, let all our actions be pious and prudent, ourselves "wise as serpents and innocent as doves," and our whole life exemplar, and just, and charitable; that we may, like lamps shining in thy temple, serve thee, and enlighten others, and guide them to thy sanctuary; and that, shining clearly and burning zealously, when the bridegroom shall come to bind up his jewels, and beautify his spouse, and gather his saints together, we, and all thy Christian people, knit in a holy fellowship, may "enter into the joy of our Lord," and partake of the eternal refreshments of the kingdom of light and glory, where thou, O holy and eternal Jesu, livest and reignest in the excellencies of a kingdom, and the infinite durations of eternity. Amen.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

Of the Causes and Manner of the Divine Judgments[a].

1. GOD'S judgments are like "the writing upon the wall," which was a missive of anger from God upon Belshazzar; it

[a] Ad. Num. 21, et 27.

came upon an errand of revenge, and yet was writ in so dark characters[b], that none could read it but a prophet. Whenever God speaks from heaven, he would have us to understand his meaning; and if he declares not his sense in particular signification, yet we understand his meaning well enough, if every voice of God lead us to repentance. Every sad accident is directed against sin, either to prevent it, or to cure it; to glorify God, or to humble us; to make us go forth of ourselves, and to rest upon the centre of all felicities, that we may derive help from the same hand that smote us. Sin and punishment are so near relatives, that when God hath marked any person with a sadness or unhandsome accident, men think it warrant enough for their uncharitable censures, and condemn the man whom God hath smitten, making God the executioner of our uncertain or ungentle sentences. "Whether sinned, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" said the Pharisees to our blessed Lord. "Neither this man nor his parents," was the answer: meaning, that God had other ends in that accident to serve; and it was not an effect of wrath, but a design of mercy, both directly and collaterally. God's glory must be seen clearly, by occasion of the curing the blind man. But, in the present case, the answer was something different. Pilate slew the Galileans, when they were sacrificing in their conventicles apart from the Jews. For they first had separated from obedience, and paying tribute to Cæsar; and then from the church, who disavowed their mutinous and discontented doctrines. The causes of the one and the other are linked in mutual complications and endearment; and he who despises the one, will quickly disobey the other. Presently, upon the report of this sad accident, the people ran to the judgment-seat, and every man was ready to be accuser, and witness, and judge, upon these poor destroyed people. But Jesus allays their heat; and though he would, by no means, acquit these persons from deserving death for their denying tribute to Cæsar, yet he alters the face of the tribunal, and makes those persons, who were so apt to be accusers and judges, to act another part, even of guilty persons too, that, since they will needs be judging, they might judge themselves: for, "Think not

[b] Πάντη δ' ἀθανάτων ἀφανὲς νόος ἀνθρώποισι. — *Solon.*

these were greater sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered such things. I tell you nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish[c]:" meaning, that although there was great probability to believe such persons, schismatics (I mean) and rebels, to be the greatest sinners of the world, yet themselves, who had designs to destroy the Son of God, had deserved as great damnation. And yet it is observable, that the holy Jesus only compared the sins of them that suffered, with the estate of the other Galileans who suffered not; and that also applies it to the persons present, who told the news: to consign this truth unto us, that when persons, confederate in the same crimes, are spared from a present judgment falling upon others of their own society, it is indeed a strong alarm to all to secure themselves by repentance against the hostilities and eruptions of sin[d]; but yet it is no exemption or security to them that escape, to believe themselves persons less sinful: for God sometimes decimates or tithes delinquent persons, and they die for a common crime, according as God hath cast their lot in the decrees of predestination; and either they that remain, are sealed up to a worse calamity, or left within the reserves and mercies of repentance; for in this there is some variety of determination and undiscerned providence.

2. The purpose of our blessed Saviour is of great use to us in all the traverses and changes, and especially the sad and calamitous accidents, of the world. But, in the misfortune of others, we are to make other discourses concerning Divine judgments, than when the case is of nearer concernment to ourselves. For, first, when we see a person come to an unfortunate and untimely death[e], we must not conclude such a man perishing and miserable to all eternity. It was a sad calamity that fell upon the man of Judah, that returned

[c] Luke, xiii. 2.

[d] —— Χρόνῳ τοι κυρία τ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
Θεοῦς ἀτίζων τις βροτῶν δώσει δίκην. — *Æschyl.* Ἱκέτιδες.

Pius scilicet Deus partem percussit sententiæ suæ gladio, ut partem corrigeret exemplo, probaretque omnibus simul et coercendo censuram, et indulgendo pietatem. — *Salvian.*

[e] De Anania et Sapphira, dixit Origines, digni enim erant in hoc seculo recipere peccatum suum, ut mundiores exeant ab hac vita, mundati castigatione sibi illatâ per mortem communem, quoniam credentes erant in Christum. Idem ait S. Aug. lib. iii. c. 1. cont. Parmen. et Cassian.

to eat bread into the prophet's house contrary to the word of the Lord: he was abused into the act by a prophet, and a pretence of a command from God; and whether he did violence to his own understanding, and believed the man because he was willing, or did it in sincerity, or in what degree of sin or excuse the action might consist, no man there knew: and yet a lion slew him, and the lying prophet that abused him, escaped, and went to his grave in peace. Some persons, joined in society or interest with criminals[f], have perished in the same judgments; and yet it would be hard to call them equally guilty, who, in the accident, were equally miserable and involved. And they who are not strangers in the affairs of the world, cannot but have heard or seen some persons, who have lived well and moderately, though not like the flames of the holocaust, yet, like the ashes of incense, sending up good perfumes, and keeping a constant and slow fire of piety and justice, yet have been surprised in the midst of some unusual, unaccustomed irregularity, and died in that sin: a sudden gaiety of fortune, a great joy, a violent change, a friend is come, or a marriage-day, hath transported some persons to indiscretions and too bold a license; and the indiscretion hath betrayed them to idle company, and the company to drink, and drink to a fall, and that hath hurried them to their grave. And it were a sad sentence to think God would not repute the untimely death for a punishment great enough to that deflexion from duty, and judge the man according to the constant tenour of his former life; unless such an act was of malice great enough to outweigh the former habits, and interrupt the whole state of acceptation and grace. Something like this was the case of Uzzah, who, espying the tottering ark, went to support it with an unhallowed hand; God smote him, and he died immediately. It were too severe to say, his zeal and indiscretion carried him beyond a temporal death to the ruins of eternity. Origen, and many others, have "made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," and did well

[f] —— Vetabo qui Cereris sacrum
Vulgârit arcanæ, sub iisdem
Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
Solvat phaselum: sæpe Diespiter,
Neglectus, incesto addidit integrum.—*Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 2.

after it; but those that did so, and died of the wound, were smitten of God, and died in their folly: and yet it is rather to be called a sad consequence of their indiscretion, than the express of a final anger from God Almighty. For as God takes off our sins and punishments by parts, remitting to some persons the sentence of death, and inflicting the fine of a temporal loss, or the gentle scourge of a lesser sickness: so also he lays it on by parts, and according to the proper proportions of the man and of the crime; and every transgression and lesser deviation from our duty does not drag the soul to death eternal, but God suffers our repentance, though imperfect, to have an imperfect effect, knocking off the fetters by degrees, and leading us in some cases to a council, in some to judgment, and in some to hell-fire: but it is not always certain that he who is led to the prison-doors, shall there lie entombed; and a man may, by a judgment, be brought to the gates of hell, and yet those gates shall not prevail against him. This discourse concerns persons, whose life is habitually fair and just, but are surprised in some unhandsome, but less criminal, action, and die, or suffer some great calamity, as the instrument of its expiation or amendment.

3. Secondly: But if the person upon whom the judgment falls be habitually vicious, or the crime of a clamorous nature or deeper tincture; if the man "sin a sin unto death," and either meets it, or some other remarkable calamity not so feared as death; provided we pass no farther than the sentence we see then executed, it is not against charity or prudence to say, this calamity, in its own formality, and by the intention of God, is a punishment and judgment. In the favourable cases of honest and just persons, our sentence and opinions ought also to be favourable, and, in such questions, to incline ever to the side of charitable construction, and read other ends of God in the accidents of our neighbour than revenge or express wrath. But when the impiety of a person is scandalous and notorious, when it is clamorous and violent, when it is habitual and yet corrigible, if we find a sadness and calamity dwelling with such a sinner, especially if the punishment be spiritual, we read the sentence of God written with his own hand, and it is not sauciness of opinion, or a pressing into the secrets of Provi-

dence, to say the same thing which God hath published to all the world in the expresses of his Spirit. In such cases we are to observe the "severity of God, on them that fall severity;" and to use those judgments as instruments of the fear of God, and arguments to hate sin; which we could not well do, but that we must look on them as verifications of God's threatening against great and impenitent sinners. But then, if we descend to particulars, we may easily be deceived.

4. For some men are diligent to observe the accidents and chances of Providence upon those especially, who differ from them in opinion; and whatever ends God can have, or whatever sins man can have, yet we lay that in fault, which we therefore hate, because it is most against our interest; the contrary opinion is our enemy, and we also think God hates it. But such fancies do seldom serve either the ends of truth or charity. Pierre Calceon died under the barber's hands[g]: there wanted not some, who said it was a judgment upon him for condemning to the fire the famous Pucelle of France, who prophesied the expulsion of the English out of the kingdom. They that thought this, believed her to be a prophetess; but others, that thought her a witch, were willing to find out another conjecture for the sudden death of the gentleman. Garnier, earl of Gretz, kept the patriarch of Jerusalem from his right in David's tower and the city, and died within three days; and, by Dabert the patriarch, it was called a judgment upon him for his sacrilege. But the uncertainty of that censure appeared to them, who considered that Baldwin (who gave commission to Garnier to withstand the patriarch) did not die; but Godfrey of Bouillon did die immediately after he had passed the right of the patriarch: and yet, when Baldwin was beaten at Rhamula, some bold people pronounced, that then God punished him upon the patriarch's score, and thought his sacrilege to be the secret cause of his overthrow[h]; and yet his own pride and rashness was the more visible, and the judgment was but a cloud, and passed away quickly into a succeeding victory. But I instance in a trifle. Certain it is, that God

[g] Pendula dum tonsor secat excrementa capilli,
Exspirans cadit, et gelidâ tellure cadaver
Decubat: ultrices sic pendunt crimina pœnas.—*Valerand.*

[h] Baron. A. D. 1100 et 2024.

removed the candlestick from the Levantine churches, because he had a quarrel unto them; for that punishment is never sent upon pure designs of emendation, or for direct and immediate purposes of the Divine glory, but ever makes reflection upon the past sin: but when we descend to a judgment of the particulars, God walks so in the dark to us, that it is not discerned upon what ground he smote them. Some say it was, because they dishonoured the eternal Jesus, in denying the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son. And in this some thought themselves sufficiently assured by a sign from heaven[1], because the Greeks lost Constantinople upon Whitsunday, the day of the festival of the Holy Spirit. The church of Rome calls the churches of the Greek communion schismatical, and thinks God righted the Roman quarrel, when he revenged his own. Some think they were cut off for being breakers of images; others think that their zeal against images was a means they were cut off no sooner: and yet he that shall observe what innumerable sects, heresies, and factions were commenced amongst them, and how they were wanton with religion, making it serve ambitious and unworthy ends, will see that, besides the ordinary conjectures of interested persons, they had such causes of their ruin, which we also now feel heavily incumbent upon ourselves. To see God adding eighteen years to the life of Hezekiah upon his prayer, and yet cutting off the young son of David begotten in adulterous embraces; to see him rejecting Adonijah, and receiving Solomon to the kingdom, begotten of the same mother, whose son God in anger formerly slew; to observe his mercies to Manasses, in accepting him to favour, and continuing the kingdom to him, and his severity to Zedekiah, in causing his eyes to be put out; to see him rewarding Nebuchadnezzar with the spoils of Egypt for destroying Tyre, and executing God's severe anger against it, and yet punishing others for being executioners of his wrath upon Jerusalem, even then when he purposed to chastise it; to see Wenceslaus raised from a peasant to a throne, and Pompey, from a great prince, reduced to that condition, that a pupil and an eunuch passed sentence of death upon him; to see great fortunes fall into the hand of a fool, and

[1] Estius.

honourable old persons, and learned men, descend to unequal beggary; to see him strike a stroke with his own hand in the conversion of Saul, and another quite contrary in the cutting off of Judas, must needs be some restraint to our judgments concerning the general state of those men who lie under the rod; but it proclaims an infinite uncertainty in the particulars, since we see contrary accidents happening to persons guilty of the same crime, or put in the same indispositions. God hath marked all great sins with some signal and express judgments, and hath transmitted the records of them, or represented them before our eyes; that is, hath done so in our age, or it hath been noted to have been done before: and that being sufficient to affright us from those crimes, God hath not thought it expedient to do the same things to all persons in the same cases, having to all persons produced instances and examples of fear by fewer accidents, sufficient to restrain us, but not enough to pass sentence upon the changes of Divine providence.

5. But sometimes God speaks plainer, and gives us notice what crimes he punishes in others, that we may the rather decline such rocks of offence. If the crime and the punishment be symbolical, and have proportion and correspondence of parts, the hand of God strikes the man, but holds up one finger to point at the sin. The death of the child of Bathsheba was a plain declaration, that the anger of God was upon David for the adulterous mixture. That blasphemer, whose tongue was presently struck with an ulcerous tumour, with his tongue declared the glories of God and his own shame. And it was not doubted but God, when he smote the lady of Dominicus Silvius, the duke of Venice, with a loathsome and unsavoury disease, did intend to chastise a remarkable vanity of hers in various and costly perfumes, which she affected in an unreasonable manner, and to very evil purposes. And that famous person, and of excellent learning, Giacchettus of Geneva[k], being by his wife found dead in the unlawful embraces of a stranger woman, who also died at the same instant, left an excellent example of God's anger upon the crime, and an evidence that he was then judged for his intemperate lust. Such are

[k] Fulgos. lib. ix. c. 12.

all those punishments, which are natural consequents to a crime: as dropsies, redness of eyes, dissolution of nerves, apoplexies[1], to continual drunkenness; to intemperate eating, short lives and sudden deaths; to lust, a caitive slavish disposition, and a foul diseased body; fire and sword, and depopulation of towns and villages, the consequents of ambition and unjust wars; poverty to prodigality; and all those judgments which happen upon cursings and horrid imprecations, when God is, under a curse, called to attest a lie, and to connive at impudence; or when the oppressed persons, in the bitterness of their souls, wish evil, and pray for vengeance on their oppressors; or that the church, upon just cause, inflicts spiritual censures, and "delivers unto Satan," or curses and declares the Divine sentence against sinners, as St. Peter against Ananias and Sapphira, and St. Paul against Elymas, and of old Moses against Pharaoh and his Egypt, (of this nature also was the plague of a withered hand inflicted upon Jeroboam, for stretching forth his hand to strike the prophet.) In these, and all such instances, the offspring is so like the parent, that it cannot easily be concealed. Sometime the crime is of that nature, that it cries aloud for vengeance, or is threatened with a special kind of punishment, which, by the observation and experience of the world, hath regularly happened to a certain sort of persons: such as are dissolutions of estates, the punishment of sacrilege; a descending curse upon posterity for four generations, specially threatened to the crime of idolatry; any plague whatsoever to oppression; untimely death to murder; an unthriving estate to the detention of tithes, or whatsoever is God's portion allotted for the services of religion; untimely and strange deaths to the persecutors of Christian religion: Nero killed himself; Domitian was killed by his servants; Maximinus and Decius were murdered, together with their children; Valerianus imprisoned, flayed, and slain with tortures, by Sapor, king of Persia; Diocletian perished by his own hand, and his house

[1] Pœna tamen præsens, cùm tu deponis amictum
Turgidus, et crudum pavonem in balnea portas.
Hinc subitæ mortes atque intestata senectus.—*Juven. Sat.* 1.

Quos nimis effrænos habui, nunc vapulo renes.
Sic luitur juvenis culpa dolore senis.

was burnt with the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, with fire from above; Antiochus, the president under Aurelian, while Agapetus was in his agony and sufferance of martyrdom, cried out of a flame within him, and died; Flaccus vomited out his entrails presently after he had caused Gregory, bishop of Spoleto, to be slain; and Dioscorus, the father of St. Barbara, accused and betrayed his daughter to the hangman's cruelty for being a Christian, and he died by the hand of God by fire from heaven. These are God's tokens, marks upon the body of infected persons, and declare the malignity of the disease, and bid us all beware of those determined crimes.

6. Thirdly: But then, in these and all other accidents, we must first observe from the cause to the effect, and then judge from the effect concerning the nature and the degree of the cause. We cannot conclude, This family is lessened, beggared, or extinct, therefore they are guilty of sacrilege: but thus, They are sacrilegious, and God hath blotted out their name from among the posterities, therefore this judgment was an express of God's anger against sacrilege: the judgment will not conclude a sin, but when a sin infers the judgment with a legible character and a prompt signification, not to understand God's choice is next to stupidity or carelessness. Arius was known to be a seditious, heretical, and dissembling person, and his entrails descended on the earth, when he went to cover his feet[m]: it was very suspicious that this was the punishment of those sins, which were the worst in him: but he that shall conclude Arius was an heretic or seditious, upon no other ground but because his bowels gushed out, begins imprudently, and proceeds uncharitably. But it is considerable, that men do not arise to great crimes on the sudden, but by degrees of carelessness to lesser impieties, and then to clamorous sins: and God is therefore said to punish great crimes, or actions of highest malignity,

[m] ———————— Ruit Arius alvo
Infelix plus mente cadens, lethumque peremptus
Cum Juda commune tulit, qui gutture pendens
Visceribus curvatus obit: nec pœna sequestrat
Quos par culpa ligat, qui majestatis honori
Vulnus ab ore parant. Hic prodidit, ille diremit
Sacrilega de voce.————

Poet. Christ. apud Baron. T. 3. *ad ann. Christ.* 336.

because they are commonly productions from the spirit of reprobation; they are the highest ascents, and suppose a body of sin. And therefore, although the judgment may be intended to punish all our sins, yet it is like the Syrian army; it kills all that are its enemies, but it hath a special commission "to fight against none but the king of Israel," because his death would be the dissolution of the body. And if God humbles a man for his great sin, that is, for those acts which combine and consummate all the rest, possibly the body of sin may separate, and be apt to be scattered and subdued by single acts and instruments of mortification: and therefore it is but reasonable, in our making use of God's judgments upon others, to think that God will rather strike at the greatest crimes; not only because they are in themselves of greatest malice and iniquity, but because they are the sum total of the rest, and, by being great progressions in the state of sin, suppose all the rest included; and we, by proportioning and observing the judgment to the highest, acknowledge the whole body of sin to lie under the curse, though the greatest only was named, and called upon with the voice of thunder. And yet, because it sometimes happens, that, upon the violence of a great and new occasion, some persons leap into such a sin, which, in the ordinary course of sinners, uses to be the effect of an habitual and growing state, then, if a judgment happens, it is clearly appropriate to that one great crime, which, as of itself it is equivalent to a vicious habit, and interrupts the acceptation of all its former contraries, so it meets with a curse, such as usually God chooses for the punishment of a whole body and state of sin. However, in making observation upon the expresses of God's anger, we must be careful that we reflect not with any bitterness or scorn upon the person of our calamitous brother, lest we make that to be an evil to him, which God intends for his benefit, if the judgment was medicinal; or that we increase the load, already great enough to sink him beneath his grave, if the judgment was intended for a final abscission.

7. Fourthly: But if the judgments descend upon ourselves, we are to take another course; not to inquire into particulars to find out the proportions, (for that can only be a design to part with just so much as we must needs,) but to

amend all that is amiss; for then only we can be secure to remove the Achan, when we keep nothing within us, or about us, that may provoke God to jealousy or wrath. And that is the proper product of holy fear, which God intended should be the first effect of all his judgments: and of this God is so careful, and yet so kind and provident, that fear might not be produced always at the expense of a great suffering, that God hath provided for us certain prologues of judgment, and keeps us waking with alarms, that so he might reconcile his mercies with our duties. Of this nature are epidemical diseases, not yet arrived at us, prodigious tempests, thunder and loud noises from heaven; and he that will not fear, when God speaks so loud, is not yet made soft with the impresses and perpetual droppings of religion. Venerable Bede reports of St. Chad[n], that if a great gust of wind suddenly arose, he presently made some holy ejaculation, to beg favour of God for all mankind, who might possibly be concerned in the effects of that wind; but, if a storm succeeded, he fell prostrate to the earth, and grew as violent in prayer as the storm was either at land or sea. But if God added thunder and lightning, he went to the church, and there spent all his time, during the tempest, in reciting litanies, psalms, and other holy prayers, till it pleased God to restore his favour, and to seem to forget his anger. And the good bishop added this reason; because these are the extensions and stretchings forth of God's hand, and yet he did not strike: but he that trembles not, when he sees God's arm held forth to strike us, understands neither God's mercies, nor his own danger; he neither knows what those horrors were, which the people saw from Mount Sinai, nor what the glories and amazement shall be at the great day of judgment. And if this religious man had seen Tullus Hostilius, the Roman king, and Anastasius, a Christian emperor, but a reputed heretic, struck dead with thunderbolts, and their own houses made their urns, to keep their ashes in; there could have been no posture humble enough, no prayers devout enough, no place holy enough, nothing sufficiently expressive of his fear, and his humility, and his adoration, and religion, to the almighty and infinite power,

[n] Hist. Gent. Anglor. lib. iii. c. 18.

and glorious mercy, of God, sending out his emissaries to denounce war with designs of peace. A great Italian general, seeing the sudden death of Alfonsus, duke of Ferrara, kneeled down instantly, saying, " And shall not this sight make me religious?" Three and twenty thousand fell, in one night, in the Assyrian camp, who were all slain for fornication. And this so prodigious a judgment was recorded in Scripture for our example and affrightment, that we should not, with such freedom, entertain a crime which destroyed so numerous a body of men in the darkness of one evening. Fear, and modesty, and universal reformation, are the purposes of God's judgments upon us, or in our neighbourhood.

8. Fifthly: Concerning judgments happening to a nation, or a church, the consideration is particular, because there are fewer capacities of making sins to become national than personal; and therefore, if we understand when a sin is national, we may the rather understand the meaning of God's hand, when he strikes a people. For national sins grow higher and higher, not merely according to the degree of the sin, or the intention alone, but according to the extension; according to its being national, so it is productive of more or less mischief to a kingdom. Customary iniquities amongst the people do then amount to the account of national sins, when they are of so universal practice as to take in well near every particular[o]; such as was that of Sodom, not to leave " ten righteous" in all the country: and such were the sins of the old world, who left but " eight persons" to escape the angry baptism of the flood. And such was the murmur of the children of Israel, refusing to march up to Canaan at the commandment of God, they all murmured but Caleb and Joshua; and this God, in the case of the Amalekites, calls " the fulfilling of their sins," and a " filling up the measure of their iniquities." And hither also I reckon the defection of the ten tribes from the house of Judah, and the Samaritan schism: these caused the total extirpation of the offending people. For although these sins were personal and private

[o] Fœcunda culpæ secula nuptias
Primùm inquinavere, et genus, et domos.
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit. — *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 6.

at first, yet, when they come to be universal, by diffusion and dissemination, and the good people remaining among them are but like drops of wine in a tun of water, of no consideration with God, save only to the preservation "of their own persons[p];" then, although the persons be private, yet all private or singular persons make the nation. But this hath happened but seldom in Christianity: I think indeed never, except in the case of mutinies and rebellion against their lawful prince, or the attesting violence done in unjust wars. But God only knows, and no man can say, that any sin is national by diffusion; and therefore, in this case, we cannot make any certain judgment or advantage to ourselves, or very rarely, by observing the changes of Providence upon a people.

9. But the next above this, in order to the procuring popular judgments, is public impunities, the not doing justice upon criminals publicly complained of and demanded, especially when the persons interested call for justice, and execution of good laws, and the prince's arm is at liberty and in full strength, and there is no contrary reason, in the particular instance, to make compensation to the public for the omission, or no care taken to satisfy the particular. Abimelech thought he had reason to be angry with Isaac, for saying Rebecca was his sister; for "one of the people might have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldst have brought evil upon us:" meaning, that the man should have escaped unpunished, by reason of the mistake, which very impunity he feared might be expounded to be a countenance and encouragement to the sin. But this was no more than his fear. The case of the Benjamites comes home to this present article; for they refused to do justice upon the men, that had ravished and killed the Levite's concubine: they lost twenty-five thousand in battle, their cities were destroyed, and the whole tribe almost extinguished. For punishing public and great acts of injustice is called, in Scripture, "putting away the evil from the land[q];" because, to this purpose, the sword is put into the prince's hand, and he "bears the sword in vain," who ceases to protect his people: and not to punish the evil is a voluntary retention of it, unless a special case

[p] Ezek. xiv. 20. [q] Deut. xvii. 12. xix. 13, 19. xxi. 9, 21, et alibi.

intervene, in which the prince thinks it convenient to give a particular pardon; provided this be not encouragement to others, nor without great reason, big enough to make compensation for the particular omission, and, with care, to render some other satisfaction to the person injured: in all other cases of impunity, that sin becomes national by forbearing, which, in the acting, was personal; and it is certain the impunity is a spring of universal evils, it is no thank to the public, if the best man be not as bad as the worst.

10. But there is a step beyond this, and of a more public concernment: such are the "laws of Omri," when a nation consents to, and makes ungodly statutes; when "mischief is established as a law," then the nation is engaged to some purpose. When I see the people despise their governors, scorn, and rob, and disadvantage the ministers of religion, make rude addresses to God, to his temple, to his sacraments; I look upon it as the insolence of an untaught people, who would as readily do the contrary, if the fear of God and the king were upon them by good examples, and precepts, and laws, and severe executions. And farther yet, when the more public and exemplar persons are without sense of religion, without a dread of majesty, without reverence to the church, without impresses of conscience and the tendernesses of a religious fear towards God; as the persons are greater in estimation of law, and in their influences upon the people, so the score of the nation advances, and there is more to be paid for in popular judgments. But when iniquity or irreligion is made a sanction, and either God must be dishonoured, or the church exauthorated, or her rites invaded by a law; then the fortune of the kingdom is at stake[r]. No sin engages a nation so much, or is so public, so solemn iniquity, as is a wicked law. Therefore, it concerns princes and states to secure the piety and innocency of their laws: and if there be any evil laws, which, upon just grounds, may be thought productive of God's anger, because a public misdemeanour cannot be expiated but

[r] —— Ilion, Ilion
Fatalis incestusque Judex,
Et mulier peregrina vertit
In pulverem, ex quo destituit Deos
Mercede pactâ Laomedon. — *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 3.

by a public act of repentance, or a public calamity, the laws must either have their edge abated by a desuetude, or be laid asleep by a non-execution, or dismembered by contrary provisoes, or have the sting drawn forth by interpretation, or else, by abrogation, be quite rescinded. But these are national sins within itself, or within its own body, by the act of the body (I mean) diffusive or representative, and they are like the personal sins of men in or against their own bodies, in the matter of sobriety. There are others in the matter of justice, as the nation relates to other people communicating in public intercourse.

11. For, as the intercourse between man and man, in the actions of commutative and distributive justice, is the proper matter of virtues and vices personal; so are the transactions between nation and nation, against the public rules of justice, sins national directly, and in their first original, and answer to injustice between man and man. Such are commencing war upon unjust titles, invasion of neighbours' territories, confederacies and aids upon tyrannical interest, wars against true religion or sovereignty, violation of the laws of nations, which they have consented to as the public instrument of accord and negotiation, breach of public faith, defending pirates, and the like. When a public judgment comes upon a nation, these things are to be thought upon, that we may not think ourselves acquitted by crying out against swearing, and drunkenness, and cheating in manufactures, which, unless they be of universal dissemination, and made national by diffusion, are paid for upon a personal score; and the private infelicities of our lives will either expiate or punish them severely. But while the people mourn for those sins of which their low condition is capable, sins that may produce a popular fever, or, perhaps, the plague, where the misery dwells in cottages, and the princes often have indemnity, as it was in the case of David: yet we may not hope to appease a war, to master a rebellion, to cure the public distemperatures of a kingdom, which threaten not the people only, or the governors also, but even the government itself, unless the sins of a more public capacity be cut off by public declarations, or other acts of national justice and religion. But the duty which concerns us, in all such cases, is, that every man, in every capacity,

should inquire into himself, and for his own portion of the calamity, put in his own symbol of emendation for his particular, and his prayers for the public interest: in which it is not safe that any private persons should descend to particular censures of the crimes of princes and states, no, not towards God, unless the matter be notorious, and past a question; but it is a sufficient assoilment of this part of his duty, if, when he hath set his own house in order, he would pray with indefinite significations of his charity and care of the public, that God would put it into the hearts of all whom it concerns, to endeavour the removal of the sin, that hath brought the exterminating angel upon the nation. But yet there are, sometimes, great lines drawn by God, in the expresses of his anger, in some judgments upon a nation; and, when the judgment is of that danger as to invade the very constitution of a kingdom, the proportions that judgments many times keep to their sins, intimate that there is some national sin, in which, either by diffusion or representation, or in the direct matter of sins, as false oaths, unjust wars, wicked confederacies, or ungodly laws, the nation, in the public capacity, is delinquent.

12. For as the nation hath, in sins, a capacity distinct from the sins of all the people, inasmuch as the nation is united in one head, guarded by a distinct and a higher angel, as Persia by St. Michael, transacts affairs in a public right, transmits influence to all particulars from a common fountain, and hath intercourse with other collective bodies, who also distinguish from their own particulars: so, likewise, it hath punishments distinct from those infelicities which vex particulars, punishments proportionable to itself, and to its own sins; such as are changes of governments, of better into worse, of monarchy into aristocracy, and so to the lowest ebb of democracy; death of princes, infant kings, foreign invasions, civil wars, a disputable title to the crown, making a nation tributary, conquest by a foreigner, and, which is worst of all, removing the candlestick from a people, by extinction of the church, or that which is necessary to its conservation, the several orders and ministries of religion: and the last hath also proper sins of its own analogy; such as are false articles in the public confessions of a church, schism from the catholic, public scandals, a general vicious-

ness of the clergy, an indifference in religion, without warmth and holy fires of zeal, and diligent pursuance of all its just and holy interests[s]. Now in these, and all parallel cases, when God, by punishments, hath probably marked and distinguished the crime, it concerns public persons to be the more forward and importunate in consideration of public irregularities: and, for the private also, not to neglect their own particulars; for, by that means, although not certainly, yet probably, they may secure themselves from falling in the public calamity. It is not infallibly sure, that holy persons shall not be smitten by the destroying angel; for God, in such deaths, hath many ends of mercy, and some of providence, to serve: but such private and personal emendations and devotions, are the greatest securities of the men against the judgment, or the evil of it, preserving them in this life, or wafting them over to a better. Thus many of the Lord's champions did fall in battle, and the armies of the Benjamites did twice prevail upon the juster people of all Israel; and the Greek empire hath declined and shrunk, under the fortune and power of the Ottoman family; and the Holy Land, which was twice possessed by Christian princes, is now in the dominion of unchristened Saracens; and, in the production of these alterations, many a gallant and pious person suffered the evils of war, and the change of an untimely death.

13. But the way for the whole nation to proceed, in cases of epidemical diseases, wars, great judgments, and popular calamities, is to do, in the public proportion, the same that every man is to do for his private; by public acts of justice, repentance, fastings, pious laws, and execution of just and religious edicts, making peace, quitting of unjust interests, declaring publicly against a crime, protesting in behalf of the contrary virtue or religion: and to this also, every man, as he is a member of the body politic, must co-operate; that, by a repentance in diffusion, help may come, as well as by a sin of universal dissemination, the plague was hastened and invited the rather. But in these

[s] Diis te minorem quòd geris, imperas.
Hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum.
Dii multa neglecti dederunt
Hesperiæ mala luctuosæ. — *Hor.* lib. iii. *Od.* 6.

cases, all the work of discerning and pronouncing, concerning the cause of the judgment, as it must be without asperity, and only for designs of correction and emendation, so it must be done by kings and prophets, and the assistance of other public persons, to whom the public is committed. Joshua cast lots upon Achan, and discovered the public trouble in a private instance; and of old, the prophets had it in commission to reprove the popular iniquity of nations, and the confederate sins of kingdoms: and, in this, Christianity altered nothing. And when this is done modestly, prudently, humbly, and penitently, oftentimes the tables turn immediately, but always in due time; and a great alteration in a kingdom becomes the greatest blessing in the world, and fastens the church, or the crown, or the public peace, in bands of great continuance and security; and it may be, the next age shall feel the benefits of our sufferance and repentance. And, therefore, as we must endeavour to secure it, so we must not be too decretory in the case of others, or disconsolate or diffident in our own, when it may so happen, that all succeeding generations shall see, that God pardoned us, and loved us, even when he smote us. Let us all learn to fear, and walk humbly. The churches of Laodicea and the Colossians suffered a great calamity, within a little while after the Spirit of God had sent them two epistles, by the ministry of St. Paul; their cities were buried in an earthquake: and yet, we have reason to think, they were churches beloved of God, and congregations of holy people.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and powerful God! thou just and righteous governor of the world! who callest all orders of men by precepts, promises, and threatenings, by mercies and by judgments, teach us to admire and adore all the wisdom, the effects, and infinite varieties of thy providence; and make us to dispose ourselves so, by obedience, by repentance, by all the manners of holy living, that we may never provoke thee to jealousy, much less to wrath and indignation against us. Keep far from us the sword of the destroying angel, and let us never perish in the public expresses of thy wrath, in diseases epidemical, with the

furies of war, with calamitous, sudden, and horrid accidents, with unusual diseases; unless that our so strange fall be more for thy glory, and our eternal benefit, and then thy will be done: we beg thy grace, that we may cheerfully conform to thy holy will and pleasure. Lord, open our understandings, that we may know the meaning of thy voice, and the signification of thy language, when thou speakest from heaven in signs and judgments; and let a holy fear so soften our spirits, and an intense love so inflame and sanctify our desires, that we may apprehend every intimation of thy pleasure at its first, and remotest, and most obscure representment, that so we may, with repentance, go out to meet thee, and prevent the expresses of thine anger. Let thy restraining grace, and the observation of the issues of thy justice, so allay our spirits, that we be not severe and forward in condemning others, nor backward in passing sentence upon ourselves. Make us to obey thy voice, described in holy Scripture, to tremble at thy voice, expressed in wonders and great effects of providence, to condemn none but ourselves, nor to enter into the recesses of tny sanctuary, and search the forbidden records of predestination; but that we may read our duty in the pages of revelation, not in the labels of accidental effects; that thy judgments may confirm thy word, and thy word teach us our duty, and we, by such excellent instruments, may enter in, and grow up in the ways of godliness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SECTION XV.

Of the Accidents happening from the Death of Lazarus, until the Death and Burial of Jesus.

1. WHILE Jesus was in Galilee, messengers came to him from Martha and her sister Mary, that he would hasten into Judea, to Bethany, to relieve the sickness and imminent dangers of their brother Lazarus. But he deferred his going till Lazarus was dead; purposing to give a great probation of his divinity, power, and mission, by a glorious miracle;

and to give God glory, and to receive reflections of the glory upon himself. For after he had staid two days, he called his disciples to go with him into Judæa, telling them, that Lazarus was dead, but he would raise him out of that sleep of death. But by that time Jesus was arrived at Bethany, " he found that Lazarus had been dead four days," and now near to putrefaction. But when Martha and Mary met him, weeping their pious tears for their dead brother, Jesus suffered the passions of piety and humanity, and wept, distilling that precious liquor into the grave of Lazarus; watering the dead plant, that it might spring into a new life, and raise his head above the ground.

2. When Jesus had, by his words of comfort and institution, strengthened the faith of the two mourning sisters, and commanded " the stone to be removed" from the grave, he made an address of adoration and eucharist to his Father, confessing his perpetual propensity to hear him, and then cried out, " Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead, came forth" from his bed of darkness, with his night-clothes on him; whom when the apostles had unloosed, at the command of Jesus, he went to Bethany: and many that were present, " believed on him;" but others, wondering and malicious, went and told the Pharisees the story of the miracle, who, upon that advice, called their great council, whose great and solemn cognizance was of the greater causes of prophets, of kings, and of the holy law. At this great assembly it was, that Caiaphas, the high-priest, prophesied, that it was " expedient, one should die for the people. And thence they determined the death of Jesus." But he, knowing they had passed a decretory sentence against him, " retired to the city Ephraim," in the tribe of Judah, near the desert, where he staid a few days, till the approximation of the feast of Easter.

3. Against which feast, when Jesus, with his disciples, was going to Jerusalem, he told them the event of the journey would be, that the Jews " should deliver him to the Gentiles;" that they " should scourge him, and mock him, and crucify him, and the third day he should rise again." After which discourse, the mother of Zebedee's children begged of Jesus, for her two sons, that " one of them might sit at his right hand, the other at the left, in his kingdom." For no discourses of his passion, or intimations of the mysteriousness of

his kingdom, could yet put them into right understandings of their condition. But Jesus, whose heart and thoughts were full of fancy, and apprehensions of the neighbour passion, gave them answer, in proportion to his present conceptions and their future condition. For if they desired the honours of his kingdom, such as they were, they should have them, unless themselves did decline them; they " should drink of his cup," and dip in his lavatory, and be " washed with his baptism," and " sit in his kingdom," if the heavenly " Father had prepared it for" them; but the donation of that immediately, was an issue of Divine election and predestination, and was only competent to them, who, by holy living and patient suffering, put themselves into a disposition of becoming vessels of election.

4. But as Jesus, in this journey, " came near Jericho," he cures " a blind man, who sat begging by the way-side;" and " espying Zaccheus, the chief of the publicans, upon a tree, (that he, being " low of stature," might, upon that advantage of station, see Jesus passing by,) he invited himself to his house; who " received him with gladness," and repentance of his crimes, purging his conscience, and filling his heart and house with joy and sanctity; for, immediately upon the arrival of the Master at his house, he offered restitution to all persons whom he had injured, and satisfaction; and half of his remanent estate he " gave to the poor," and so gave the fairest entertainment to Jesus, who brought along with him " salvation to his house." There it was that he spake the parable of the king, who concredited divers talents to his servants, and having at his return exacted an account, rewarded them who had improved their bank, and been faithful in their trust, with rewards proportionable to their capacity and improvement; but the negligent servant, who had not meliorated his stock, was punished with ablegation, and confinement to outer darkness. And from hence sprang up that dogmatical proposition, which is mysterious and determined in Christianity: " To him that hath, shall be given: and from him that hath not, shall be taken away even what he hath." After this, going forth of Jericho, he cured two blind men upon the way.

5. Six days before Easter, " Jesus came to Bethany," where he was feasted by Martha and Mary, and accompanied

by Lazarus, who "sat at the table with Jesus." But "Mary brought a pound of nard pistic[a]," and, as formerly she had done, again "anoints the feet of Jesus, and fills the house with the odour," till God himself smelt thence a savour of a sweet-smelling sacrifice. But Judas Iscariot, the thief and the traitor, repined at the vanity of the expense, (as he pretended,) because it might have been "sold for three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor." But Jesus, in his reply, taught us, that there is an opportunity for actions of religion, as well as of charity. "Mary did this against the burial of Jesus," and her religion was accepted by him, to whose honours the holocaust of love and the oblations of alms-deeds are, in their proper seasons, direct actions of worship and duty. But, at this meeting, "there came many Jews to see Lazarus, who was raised from death, as well as to see Jesus:" and because, by occasion of his resurrection, "many of them believed on Jesus;" therefore the Pharisees "deliberated about putting him to death." But God, in his glorious providence, was pleased to preserve him as a trumpet of his glories, and a testimony of the miracle, thirty years after the death of Jesus[b].

6. "The next day," being the fifth day before the passover, "Jesus came to the foot of the Mount of Olives," and "sent his disciples to Bethphage, a village in the neighbourhood," commanding them to "unloose an ass and a colt, and bring them to him," and "to tell the owners it was done for the master's use; and they did so:" and when they brought the ass to Jesus, he rides on him to Jerusalem; and "the people," having notice of his approach, "took branches of palm-trees, and went out to meet him, strewing branches and garments in the way, crying out, Hosanna to the Son of David!" which was a form of exclamation used to the honour of God, and in great solemnities, and signifies "adoration to the Son of David, by the rite of carrying branches[c]:" which

[a] Pisticam, id est, spicatam, corruptè, uti ex Latinis ferè solent Græci. —*Erasm. in* xiv. *Marci.*

[b] Epiphan. cont. Manich.

[c] Ὑφηλᾶν ἀρετᾶν καὶ
Στεφάνων ἄωτον γλυκύν. — *Olymp.* v. 1.
Pindarus vocat palmarum ramos, altissimarum virtutum et coronarum florem suavem.

when they used in procession about their altars, they used to pray, "Lord, save us; Lord, prosper us;" which hath occasioned the reddition of "Hoschiannah" to be, amongst some, that prayer which they repeated at the carrying of the "Hoschiannah," as if itself did signify, "Lord, save us." But this honour was so great and unusual to be done, even to kings [d], that the Pharisees, knowing this to be an appropriate manner of address to God, said one to another, by way of wonder, "Hear ye what these men say?" For they were troubled to hear the people revere him as a God.

7. When Jesus, from the Mount of Olives, "beheld Jerusalem, he wept over it," and foretold great sadnesses and infelicities futurely contingent to it; which not only happened in the sequel of the story, according to the main issues and significations of this prophecy, but even to minutes and circumstances it was verified. For in the Mount of Olives, where Jesus shed tears over perishing Jerusalem, the Romans first pitched their tents, when they came to its final overthrow [e]. From thence descending to the city, he went into the temple, and still the acclamations followed him, till the Pharisees were ready to burst with the noises abroad, and the tumults of envy and scorn within; and by observing, that all their endeavours to suppress his glories were but like clapping their hands to veil the sun; and that, in despite of all their stratagems, the whole nation was become disciples to the glorious Nazarene. And there he cured certain persons, that were "blind and lame."

8. But whilst he abode at Jerusalem, "certain Greeks, who came to the feast to worship," made their address to Philip, that they might be brought to Jesus. "Philip tells Andrew, and they both tell Jesus;" who, having admitted them, discoursed many things concerning his passion, and then prayed a petition, which is the end of his own sufferings, and of all human actions, and the purpose of the whole creation, "Father, glorify thy name." To which he was answered by "a voice from heaven, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." But this, nor the whole series of miracles that he did, the mercies, the cures, nor the divine

[d] Drusius de Vocib. Heb. N. T. c. 19. Cauin. de locis, N. T.
[e] Joseph. de bello Jud. lib. vi. c. 3.

discourses, could gain the faith of all the Jews, who were determined by their human interest; for "many of the rulers who believed on him, durst not confess him, because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Then Jesus again exhorted all men, "to believe on him, that so they might, in the same act, believe on God; that they might approach unto the light, and not abide in darkness; that they might obey the commandments of the Father, whose express charge it was, that Jesus should preach this Gospel; and that they might not be judged at the last day by the word which they have rejected, which word, to all its observers, is everlasting life." After which sermon retiring to Bethany, he abode there all night.

9. On the morrow, returning to Jerusalem, on the way being hungry, he passed by a fig-tree; where, expecting fruit, he found none, and cursed the fig-tree, which, by the next day, was dried up and withered; upon occasion of which preternatural event, Jesus discoursed of the power of faith, and its power to produce miracles. But upon this occasion, others[f], the disciples of Jesus in after-ages, have pleased themselves with fancies and imperfect descants, as that he cursed this tree in mystery and secret intendment; it having been the tree, in the eating whose fruit, Adam, prevaricating the divine law, made an inlet to sin, which brought in death, and the sadnesses of Jesus' passion. But Jesus, having entered the city, came into the temple, and preached the Gospel; and the chief priests and scribes questioned his commission, and by what authority he did those things. But Jesus promising to answer them, if they would declare their opinions concerning John's baptism, which they durst not, for fear of "displeasing the people," or throwing dirt in their own faces, was acquitted of his obligation, by their declining the proposition.

10. But there he reproved the Pharisees and rulers, by the parable of two sons; "the first whereof said to his father, he would not obey, but repented, and did his command; the second gave good words, but did nothing: meaning, that persons of the greatest improbability were more heartily converted than they, whose outside seemed to have appropriated

[f] Isidor. ad Theopomp. lib. i. ep. 51.

religion to the labels of their frontlets. He added a parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, who killed the servants sent to demand the fruits, and at last the son himself, that they might invade the inheritance; but made a sad commination to all such, who should either stumble at this stone, or on whom this stone should fall." After which, and some other reprehensions, which he so veiled in parable, that it might not be expounded to be calumny or declamation; although such sharp sermons had been spoken in the people's hearing, but yet so transparently, that themselves might see their own iniquity in those modest and just representments, the Pharisees would fain have seized him, but they durst not for the people, but resolved, if they could, " to entangle him in his talk;" and, therefore, " sent out spies, who should pretend" sanctity and veneration of his person, who, with a goodly insinuating preface, that " Jesus regarded no man's person, but spake the word of God" with much simplicity and justice, desired to know if it were " lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, or not." A question which was of great dispute, because of the numerous sect of the Galileans, who denied it, and of the affections of the people, who loved their money, and their liberty, and the privileges of their nation. And now, in all probability, he should fall under the displeasure of the people, or of Cæsar. But Jesus called to " see a penny," and finding it to be superscribed with Cæsar's image, with incomparable wisdom he brake their snare, and established an evangelical proposition for ever, saying, " Give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."

11. Having so excellently, and so much to their wonder, answered the Pharisees, the Sadducees bring their great objection to him against the resurrection, by putting a case of a woman married to seven husbands, and " whose wife should she be in the resurrection?" thinking that to be an impossible state, which engages upon such seeming incongruities, that a woman should at once be wife to seven men. But Jesus first answered their objection, telling them, that all those relations, whose foundation is in the imperfections and passions of flesh and blood, and duties here below, shall cease in that state, which is so spiritual, that it is like to the condition of angels, amongst whom there is no difference of sex, no cognations,

no genealogies or derivation from one another; and then, by a new argument, proves the resurrection, by one of God's appellatives, who did then delight to be called "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:" for, since "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," unto him even these men are alive; and if so, then either they now exercise acts of life, and therefore shall be restored to their bodies, that their actions may be complete, and they not remain in a state of imperfection to all eternity; or if they be alive, and yet cease from operation, they shall be much rather raised up to a condition, which shall actuate and make perfect their present capacities and dispositions, lest a power and inclination should for ever be in the root, and never rise up to fruit or herbage, and so be an eternal vanity, like an old bud, or an eternal child.

12. After this, the Pharisees being well pleased, not that Jesus spake so excellently, but that the Sadducees were confuted, came to him, asking, "which was the great commandment?" and some other things, more out of curiosity than pious desires of satisfaction. But at last Jesus was pleased to ask them concerning Christ, "whose son he was?" They answered, "The Son of David:" but he replying, "How then doth David call him Lord? (The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand," &c.) they had nothing to answer. But Jesus then gave his disciples caution against the pride, the hypocrisy, and the oppression of the Scribes and Pharisees; and commended the "poor widow's" oblation of her "two mites into the treasury," it being a great love in a little print, for it was "all her living." All this was spoken in the temple, the goodly stones of which when the apostles beheld with wonder, they being white and firm, twenty cubits in length, twelve in breadth, eight in depth, as Josephus reports[s], Jesus prophesies the destruction of the place: concerning which prediction, when the apostles, being with him at the Mount of Olives, asked him privately concerning the time and the signs of so sad event, he discoursed largely "of his coming to judgment against that city, and interweaved predictions of the universal judgment of all the world; of which this, though very sad, was but a small

[s] Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 14.

adumbration: adding precepts of watchfulness, and standing in preparation with hearts filled with grace, our lamps always shining, that, when the bridegroom shall come, we may be ready to enter in; which was intended in the parable of the five wise virgins:" and concluded his sermon with a narrative of his passion, foretelling that, within two days, he should be crucified.

13. Jesus descended from the mount, and came to Bethany, and, turning into the house of Simon the leper, Mary Magdalen having been reproved by Judas for spending ointment upon Jesus' feet, it being so unaccustomed and large a profusion, thought now to speak her love once more, and trouble nobody, and therefore she "poured ointment on his sacred head," believing that, being a pompousness of a more accustomed festivity, would be indulged to the expressions of her affection: but now all the disciples murmured, wondering at the prodigiousness of the woman's religion, great enough to consume a province in the overflowings of her thankfulness and duty. But Jesus now also entertained the sincerity of her miraculous love, adding this prophecy, that "where the Gospel should be preached," there also a record of this act should be kept, as a perpetual monument of her piety, and an attestation of his divinity, who could foretell future contingencies; Christianity receiving the greatest argument from that, which St. Peter calls "the surer word of prophecy," meaning it to be greater than the testimony of miracles, not easy to be dissembled by impure spirits, and whose efficacy should descend to all ages: for this prophecy shall for ever be fulfilling, and, being every day verified, does every day preach the divinity of Christ's person and of his institution.

14. "Two days before the Passover," the Scribes and Pharisees called a council, to contrive crafty ways of destroying Jesus, they not daring to do it by open violence. Of which meeting when Judas Iscariot had notice, (for those assemblies were public and notorious,) he ran from Bethany, and offered himself to betray his Master to them, if they would give him a considerable reward. "They agreed for thirty pieces of silver." Of what value each piece was, is uncertain; but their own nation hath given a rule, that when a piece of silver is named in the pentateuch, it signifies a

sicle; if it be named in the prophets, it signifies a pound; if in the other writings of the Old Testament, it signifies a talent[h]. This, therefore, being alleged out of the prophet Jeremiah by one of the evangelists[i], it is probable the price, at which Judas sold his Lord, was thirty pound weight of silver; "a goodly price" for the Saviour of the world to be prized at by his undiscerning and unworthy countrymen.

15. The next day was "the first day of unleavened bread," on which it was necessary "they should kill the Passover;" therefore "Jesus sent Peter and John to the city to a certain man," whom they should find "carrying a pitcher of water" to his house; him they should follow, and there "prepare the Passover." They went, and found the man in the same circumstances, and prepared for Jesus and his family, who, at the even, came to celebrate the Passover. It was the house of John, surnamed Mark, which had always been open to this blessed family, where he was pleased to finish his last Supper, and the mysteriousness of the vespers of his passion[k].

16. When evening was come, Jesus stood with his disciples, and ate the Paschal lamb; after which he "girt himself with a towel," and, taking "a basin, washed the feet of his disciples," not only by the ceremony, but in his discourses, instructing them in the doctrine of humility, which the Master, by his so great condescension to his disciples, had made sacred, and imprinted the lesson in lasting characters by making it symbolical. But Peter was unwilling to be washed by his Lord, until he was told he must renounce his part in him, unless he were washed; which option being given to Peter, he cried out, "Not my feet only, but my hands and my head." But Jesus said the ablution of the feet was sufficient for the purification of the whole man; relating to the custom of those countries, who

[h] Elias Levita Jud. in Tisbi. Arias Montanus in diction. Syro-Chaldaic.

[i] Matt. xxvii. 9, ubi citatur Jeremias pro Zecharia, per errorem illapsum in codices. Nam tempore S. Augustini in nonnullis codicibus [Zecharias] legebatur; atque hodie in Syriac. T. Sed fortassis ex traditione hoc descendit à Jeremia dictum, sicut multa alia in Vet. Testam. non descripta, et in N.T. repetita: quod eò magis est credibile, quia proverbialiter dictum apud Judæos, spiritum Jeremiæ resedisse in Zecharia.

[k] Alexand. Mon. apud Metaphrasten die 11 Junii. Vide Adrichom. in descript. Jerus. n. 6.

used to go to supper immediately from the baths, who therefore were sufficiently clean, save only on their feet, by reason of the dust contracted in their passage from the baths to the dining-rooms; from which when, by the hospitable master of the house, they were caused to be cleansed, they needed no more ablution: and by it Jesus, passing from the letter to the spirit, meant, that the body of sin was washed in the baths of baptism; and afterwards, if we remained in the same state of purity, it was only necessary to purge away the filth contracted in our passage from the font to the altar; and then we are clean all over, when the baptismal state is unaltered, and the little adherencies of imperfection and passions are also washed off.

17. But, after the manducation of the Paschal lamb, it was the custom of the nation to sit down to a second supper, in which they ate herbs and unleavened bread, the major-domo first dipping his morsel, and then the family; after which the father brake bread into pieces, and distributed a part to every of the guests, and, first drinking himself, gave to the rest the chalice filled with wine, according to the age and dignity of the person, adding to each distribution a form of benediction proper to the mystery, which was eucharistical and commemorative of their deliverance from Egypt. This supper Jesus being to celebrate, changed the forms of benediction, turned the ceremony into mystery, and gave his body and blood in sacrament and religious configuration; so instituting the venerable sacrament, which, from the time of its institution, is called "the Lord's Supper:" which rite Jesus commanded the apostles to perpetuate in commemoration of him, their Lord, until his second coming. And this was the first delegation of a perpetual ministry, which Jesus made to his apostles, in which they were to be succeeded to in all generations of the church.

18. But Jesus, being "troubled in spirit," told his apostles, that "one of them should betray him;" which prediction he made, that they might not be scandalized at the sadness of objection of the passion, but be confirmed in their belief, seeing so great demonstration of his wisdom and spirit of prophecy. The disciples were all troubled at this sad arrest, "looking one on another, and doubting of whom he spake;" but they "beckoned to the beloved disciple,

leaning on Jesus' breast, that he might ask:" for they, who knew their own innocency and infirmity, were desirous to satisfy their curiosity, and to be rid of their indetermination and their fear. But Jesus being asked, gave them a sign, and " a sop " to Judas, commanding him to " do what he list speedily;" for Jesus was extremely " straitened," till he had drunk the chalice off, and accomplished his mysterious and afflictive baptism. After " Judas received the sop, the devil entered into him, and Judas went forth immediately, it being now night."

19. When he was gone out, Jesus began his farewell sermon, rarely mixed of sadness and joys, and studded with mysteries as with emeralds, discoursing " of the glorification of God in his Son, and of those glories which the Father had prepared for him; of his sudden departure, and his migration to a place whither they could not come yet, but afterwards they should; meaning, first to death, and then to glory: commanding them to love one another; and foretelling to Peter, (who made confident protests that he would die with his Master,) that ' before the cock should crow twice, he should deny him thrice.' But lest he should afflict them with too sad representments of his present condition, he comforts them with the comforts of faith, with the intendments of his departure ' to prepare places ' in heaven ' for them,' whither they might come by him, who is ' the way, the truth, and the life;' adding a promise in order to their present support and future felicities, that, ' if they should ask of God any thing in his name, they should receive it;' and, upon condition they would love him, and keep his commandments, he would pray for the Holy Ghost to come upon them, to supply his room, to furnish them with proportionable comforts, to enable them with great gifts, to ' lead them into all truth,' and to abide with them for ever." Then arming them against future persecutions, giving them divers holy precepts, discoursing of his emanation from the Father, and of the necessity of his departure, he gave them his blessing, and prayed for them; and then, " having sung a hymn," which was part of the great Allelujah beginning at the 114th psalm, " When Israel came out of Egypt," and ending at the 118th inclusively, " went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, unto the Mount of Olives, to

a village called Gethsemane, where there was a garden, into which he entered to pray together with his disciples."

20. But "taking Peter, James, and John, apart with him about a stone's cast" from the rest, "he began to be exceeding sorrowful," and sad "even unto death." For now he saw the ingredients of his bitter draught pouring into the chalice, and the sight was full of horror and amazement; he therefore "fell on his face, and prayed, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." In this prayer he fell into so sad "an agony," that the pains, inflicted by his Father's wrath, and made active by his own apprehension, were so great, that a "sweat" distilled from his sacred body as great and conglobated "as drops of blood[1];" and God, who heard his prayer, but would not answer him in kind, sent "an angel to comfort him" in the sadness, which he was pleased not to take away. But, knowing that the drinking this cup was the great "end of his coming into the world," he laid aside all his own interests, and divested himself of the affections of flesh and blood, "willing his Father's will;" and because his Father commanded, he, in defiance of sense and passion, was desirous to suffer all our pains. But as, when two seas meet, the billows contest in ungentle embraces, and make violent noises, till, having wearied themselves into smaller waves and disunited drops, they run quietly into one stream: so did the spirit and nature of Jesus assault each other with disagreeing interests and distinguishing disputations, till the earnestness of the contention was diminished by the demonstrations of the spirit, and the prevailings of grace, which the sooner got the victory, because they were not to contest with an unsanctified or a rebellious nature, but a body of affections which had no strong desires, but of its own preservation: and therefore "Jesus went thrice," and prayed the same prayer, that, "if it were possible, the cup might pass from him," and thrice made an act of resignation, and in the intervals "came and found his apostles asleep," gently chiding their incuriousness, and warning them to "watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation;" till the time that the

[1] Quidam ex Hegesippo notant, ex irroratione sanguinis Christi natam arborem. Sic Philippus Bosquius et alii. Sed hæ sunt meræ nugæ.

traitor "came with a multitude, armed with swords and staves, from the priests and elders of the people," to apprehend him.

21. Judas gave them the opportunity of "the night;" that was all the advantage they had by him, because they durst not seize him by day for fear of the people; and he signified the person of his Master to the soldiers by "a kiss," and an address of seeming civility. But when they came towards him, "Jesus said, Whom seek ye? They said, Jesus of Nazareth. He said, I am he." But there was a divinity upon him, that they could not seize him at first: but as a wave climbing of a rock is beaten back and scattered into members, till, falling down, it creeps with gentle waftings, and kisses the feet of the stony mountain, and so encircles it: so the soldiers, coming at first with a rude attempt, were twice repelled by the glory of his person, till they, falling at his feet, were at last admitted to the seizure of his body, having, by those involuntary prostrations, confessed his power greater than theirs, and that the lustre and influence of a God are greater than the violences and rudenesses of soldiers[m]. And still they, like weak eyes, durst not behold the glory of this sun, till a cloud, like a dark veil, did interrupt the emissions of his glories; they could not seize upon him, till they had thrown a veil upon his holy face: which, although it was a custom of the easterlings, and of the Roman empire generally[n]; yet in this case was violence and necessity, because a certain impetuosity, and vigorousness of spirit, and divinity, issuing from his holy face, made them to take sanctuary in darkness, and to throw a veil over him in that dead time of a sad and dismal night. But Peter, a stout Galilean[o], bold and zealous, attempted a rescue, and "smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear;" but Jesus rebuked the intemperance of his passion, and commanded him to "put up his sword," saying, "all they that strike with the sword, shall perish with the sword;" so putting a bridle upon the illegal inflictions and expresses of anger or revenge from an incompetent authority. But "Jesus touched Malchus's ear, and cured it."

[m] S. Hieron. in Matt. c. 9.

[n] I, lictor, obnube caput liberatoris urbis hujus. — *Liv.*

[o] Ὅπως θρασύστομος Σίμων. — *Nonn.*

22. When Jesus had yielded himself into their power, and was now "led away by the chief priests, captains of the temple, elders of the people, and soldiers," who all came in combination and covenant to surprise him, "his disciples fled;" and John, the evangelist, who, with grief and an overrunning fancy, had forgot to lay aside his upper garment, which in festivals they are used to put on, began to make escape, but, being arrested by his linen upon his bare body, was forced to leave that behind him, that himself might escape his Master's danger: for now was verified the prophetical saying, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But Peter followed afar off;" and the greatness of John's love, when he had mastered the first inconsiderations of his fear, made him to return a while after into the high priest's hall.

23. Jesus was "first led to Annas," who was the prince of the Sanhedrim, and had cognizance of prophets and public doctrines; who therefore "inquired of Jesus concerning his disciples and his discipline:" but he answered, that his doctrine had been public or popular, that he never taught in conventicles; and therefore referred him to the testimony of all the people. For which free answer, "a servant standing by, smote him on the face;" and Jesus meekly asked him what evil he had done. But Annas, without the seventy assessors, could judge nothing, and therefore "sent him bound to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year," president of the rites of the temple, as the other high priest was of the great council. Thither Peter came, and had admission by the means of another disciple, supposed to be John, who, having sold his possessions in Galilee to Caiaphas, came and dwelt near Mount Sion, but was, by intervention of that bargain, made "known to the high priest," and "brought Peter into the house:" where, when Peter was challenged three times by the servants to be a Galilean, and of Jesus's family, he "denied" and "forswore" it; till "Jesus, looking back," reminded him of his prediction, and the foulness of the crime, "and the cock crew;" for it was now the second cock-crowing after ten of the clock in the fourth watch. "And Peter went out, and wept bitterly," that he might cleanse his soul, washing off the foul stains he had contracted in his shameful perjury and denying of his Lord.

And it is reported of the same holy person[p], that ever after, when he heard the cock crow, he wept, remembering the old instrument of his conversion, and his own unworthiness, for which he never ceased to do actions of sorrow and sharp repentance.

24. On the morning the council was to assemble; and whilst Jesus was detained in expectation of it, the servants "mocked him," and did all actions of affront and ignoble despite to his sacred head: and because the question was, whether he were a prophet, "they covered his eyes, and smote him" in derision, calling on him to "prophesy who smote him." But "in the morning, when the high priests and rulers of the people were assembled, they sought false witness against Jesus, but found none" to purpose; they railed boldly, and could prove nothing; they accused vehemently, and the allegations were of such things as were no crimes; and the greatest article, which the united diligence of all their malice could pretend, was, that "he said he would destroy the temple, and in three days build it up again." But Jesus neither answered this, nor any other of their vainer allegations; for the witnesses destroyed each others' testimony by their disagreeing: till at last Caiaphas, who, to verify his prophecy, and to satisfy his ambition, and to bait his envy, was furiously determined Jesus should die, "adjures him by the living God to say, whether he were the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus knew his design to be an inquisition of death, not of piety or curiosity; yet, because "his hour was now come," openly affirmed it, without any expedient to elude the high priest's malice, or to decline the question.

25. When Caiaphas heard the saying, he accused Jesus of "blasphemy," and pretended an apprehension so tragical, that he over-acted his wonder, and feigned detestation; for "he rent his garments," (which was the interjection of the country, and custom of the nation, but forbidden to the high priest,) and called presently to sentence: and, as it was agreed beforehand, "they all condemned him as guilty of death," and, as far as they had power, inflicted it; for they "beat him with their fists, smote him with the palms of their hands, spit upon him," and abused him beyond the license of

[p] Arsenius in Vitis Pp.

enraged tyrants. When Judas heard that they had passed the final and decretory sentence of death upon his Lord, he, who thought not it would have gone so far, "repented him" to have been an instrument of so damnable a machination, and came and "brought the silver," which they gave him for hire, "threw it in amongst them, and said, I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood." But they, incurious of those hell-torments Judas felt within him, because their own fires burnt not yet, dismissed him, and, upon consultation, bought with the money "a field to bury strangers in." And "Judas went and hanged himself:" and the judgment was made more notorious and eminent by an unusual accident at such deaths, for he so swelled, that "he burst, and his bowels gushed out." But the Greek scholiast, and some others[q], report out of Papias, St. John's scholar, that Judas fell from the fig-tree on which he hanged, before he was quite dead, and survived his attempt some while, being so sad a spectacle of deformity, and pain, and a prodigious tumour, that his plague was deplorable, and highly miserable, till at last he burst in the very substance of his trunk, as being extended beyond the possibilities and capacities of nature.

26. But the high priests had given Jesus over to the secular power, and carried him to Pilate, to be put to death by his sentence and military power: but coming thither, they "would not enter into the judgment-hall" because of the feast; but Pilate met them, and, willing to decline the business, bade them "judge him according to their own law." They replied, "It was not lawful for them to put any man to death;" meaning, during the seven days of unleavened bread, (as appears in the instance of Herod, who detained Peter in prison, intending, after Easter, to bring him out to the people.) And their malice was restless, till the sentence they had passed, were put in execution. Others thinking[r], that all the right of inflicting capital punishments was taken from the nation by the Romans; and Josephus writes[s], that when Ananias, their high priest, had, by a council of the Jews, condemned St. James, the

[q] Euthym. in 26 Matt. Cedren. in Compend. Œcumen. in c. 1. Act. Juvencus Hist. Evang. lib. iv. Beda de Locis Sanct. c. 4.

[r] S. Aug. Tract. 114. in Joan. Cyrill. in Joan. lib. xii. c. 6. Chrysost. Hom. 12. in Joan. Ambros. Serm. de Calend. Januar. lib. xx.

[s] Antiq. c. 8.

brother of our Lord, and put him to death, without the consent of the Roman president, he was deprived of his priesthood. But because Pilate, who, either by common right, or at that time, was the judge of capital inflictions, was averse from intermeddling in the condemnation of an innocent person, they attempted him with excellent craft; for, knowing that Pilate was a great servant of the Roman greatness, and a hater of the sect of the Galileans, the high priest accused Jesus, that he was of that sect, that he "denied paying tribute to Cæsar," that he "called himself king." Concerning which, when Pilate interrogated Jesus, he answered, that "his kingdom was not of this world;" and Pilate, thinking he had nothing to do with the other, came forth again, and gave testimony, that "he found nothing worthy of death in Jesus." But hearing that he was "a Galilean," and of "Herod's jurisdiction, Pilate sent him to Herod, who was at Jerusalem" at the feast. "And Herod was glad, because he had heard much of him," and, since his return from Rome, "had desired to see him," but could not, by reason of his own avocations, and the ambulatory life of Christ; and now "he hoped to see a miracle done by him," of whom he had heard so many. But the event of this was, that Jesus did there no miracle; "Herod's soldiers set him at nought, and mocked him. And that day Herod was reconciled to Pilate." And "Jesus was sent back," arrayed in a white and splendid garment[t]: which, though possibly it might be intended for derision, yet was a symbol of innocence, condemned persons usually being arrayed in black. And when Pilate had again examined him, "Jesus, meek as a lamb, and as a sheep before the shearers, opened not his mouth; insomuch that Pilate wondered," perceiving the greatest innocence of the man, by not offering to excuse or lessen any thing: for, though "Pilate had power to release him, or crucify him," yet his contempt of death was in just proportion to his innocence; which also Pilate concealed not, but published Jesus' innocence, by Herod's and his own sentence; to the great regret of the rulers, who, like ravening wolves, thirsted for a draught of blood, and to devour the morning-prey.

[t] Joseph. lib. xvi. c. 14. Idem in Vita sua.

27. But Pilate hoped to prevail upon the rulers, by making it a favour from them to Jesus, and an indulgence from him to the nation, to set him free: for, oftentimes, even malice itself is driven out by the devil of self-love, and so we may be acknowledged the authors of a safety, we are content to rescue a man even from our own selves. Pilate, therefore, offered, that, according to the "custom" of the nation, Jesus should be "released" for the honour of the present festival, and as a donative to the people. But the spirit of malice was here the more prevalent, and they desired, that "Barabbas, a murderer, a thief, and a seditious person," should be exchanged for him. Then Pilate, casting about all ways to acquit Jesus of punishment, and himself of guilt, offered to "scourge him, and let him go," hoping that a lesser draught of blood might stop the furies and rabidness of their passion, without their bursting with a river of his best and vital liquor. But these leeches would not so let go; "they cry out, Crucify him;" and, to engage him finally, they told him, "if he did let this man go, he was no friend to Cæsar."

28. But Pilate called for "water, and washed his hands," to demonstrate his own unwillingness, and to reject and transmit the guilt upon them, who took it on them as greedily as they sucked the blood; "they cried out, His blood be on us and our children." As Pilate was going to give sentence, "his wife, being troubled in her dreams, sent," with the earnestness and passion of a woman, that he should "have nothing to do with that just person;" but he was engaged: Cæsar and Jesus, God and the king, did seem to have different interests; or, at least, he was threatened into that opinion; and Pilate, though he was satisfied it was but calumny and malice, yet he was loath to venture upon his answer at Rome, in case the high priest should have accused him. For no man knows whether the interest or the mistake of his judge may cast the sentence; and whoever is accused strongly, is never thought entirely innocent. And, therefore, not only against the Divine laws, but against the Roman too, he condemned an innocent person, upon objections notoriously malicious; he adjudged him to a death, which was only due to public thieves and homicides, (crimes with which he was not charged,) upon a pretence of blas-

phemy, of which he stood accused, but not convicted, and for which, by the Jewish law, he should have been stoned, if found guilty. And this he did put into present execution, against the Tiberian law, which, about twelve years before, decreed in favour of condemned persons, that, after sentence, execution should be deferred ten days[u].

29. And now was the holy Lamb to bleed. First, therefore, Pilate's soldiers "array him in a kingly robe, put a reed in his hand," for a sceptre, "plait a crown of thorns, and put it on his head; they bow the knee, and mock him; they smite him" with his fantastic sceptre, and, instead of tribute, pay him with "blows and spittings upon his holy head:" and, when they had emptied the whole stock of poisonous contempt, "they divest him of the robes" of mockery, "and put on him his own;" they lead him to a pillar, and bind him fast, and "scourge him" with whips, a punishment that slaves only did use to suffer[x], (free persons being, in certain cases, beaten with rods and clubs,) that they might add a new scorn to his afflictions, and make his sorrows, like their own guilt, vast and mountainous. After which, Barabbas being "set free, Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified."

30. The soldiers, therefore, having framed a "cross," sad and heavy, laid it upon Jesus' shoulders, (who, like Isaac, bore the wood with which he was to be sacrificed himself,) and they drive him out to "crucifixion," who was scarce able to stand under that load. It is generally supposed that Jesus bore the whole tree, that is, both the parts of his cross; but to him that considers it, it will seem impossible: and, therefore, it is more likely, and agreeable to the old manner of crucifying malefactors, that Jesus only carried the cross part[y]; the body of it being upon the place either

[u] Sueton. in Tiberio, c. 75. Dio Rom. Hist. lib. 57.

Sub Tiberio et Druso Coss. Corruptus autem est codex Epist. Sidonii, qui ait, Nunc ex vetere S. C. Tiberiano triginta dierum vitam post sententiam trahit.

[x] Lib. in servorum, D. de pœnis. Lib. Levis, D. de Accus.

[y] Lignum transversum solùm portavit Jesus, scil. Patibulum, ad locum ubi crux, scil. lignum oblongum, terrâ defixum stetit. Sic Plautus, Patibulum ferant per urbem, et cruci affigantur. Malè ergo pictores hodierni pingunt Jesum, bajulantem utrumque lignum scil. — *Lipsius Tract. de Supplicio Crucis.*

already fixed, or prepared, for its station. Even that lesser part was grievous and intolerable to his tender, virginal, and weakened body; and when he fainted, "they compel Simon, a Cyrenian," to help him. "A great" and a mixed "multitude followed Jesus to Golgotha," the charnel house of the city, and the place of execution. But the "women wept" with bitter exclamations, and their sadness was increased by the sad predictions Jesus then made of their future misery, saying, "Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children: for the time shall come that men shall say, Blessed are the barren that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck; for they shall call on the hills to cover them, and on the mountains to fall upon them," that, by a sudden ruin, they may escape the lingering calamities of famine and fear, and the horror of a thousand deaths.

31. "When Jesus was come to Golgotha[z]," a place in the mount of Calvary, (where, according to the tradition of the ancients, Adam was buried[a], and where Abraham made an altar, for the sacrifice of his son[b],) by the piety of his disciples, and, it is probable, of those good women, which did use to minister to him, there was provided "wine mingled with myrrh," which, among the Levantines, is an excellent and pleasant mixture, and such as the piety and indulgence of the nations used to administer to condemned persons[c]. But Jesus, who, by voluntary susception, did choose to suffer our pains, refused that refreshment, which the piety of the women presented to him. The soldiers, having stripped him, nailed him to the cross with four nails[d],

[z] Εἰσάκε χῶρον ἵκανε φατιζομένοιο Κρανίου,
Ἀδὰμ πρωτογόνοιο φερώνυμον ἄντυγι κύρσης. — *Nonnus in Joan.*
Golgotha locus est capitis, Calvaria quondam,
Lingua paterna prior sic illum nomine dixit.
Hîc hominem primum suscepimus esse sepultum:
Hîc medium terræ est ———.

[a] Tertul. lib. ii. contra Marcion. Origen. Tract. 35. in Matth. Basil. in Levit. c. 5. Athan. de Pass. et Cruce, et ferè omnes Pp. unico excepto, Hieronymo, in Epist. ad Ephes. c. 5. et in c. 27 Matt.

[b] S. Aug. Serm. 71. de Tempore.

[c] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xiv. c. 13. Athenæus, lib. xi. c. 30.
Si calidum potas, ardenti myrrha Falerno
Convenit, et melior fit sapor indè mero.—*Martial.* lib. xiv.

[d] Ego dabo ei talentum, primus qui in crucem excurrerit: Sed eâ lege, ut affigantur bis pedes, bis brachia. — *Plaut. Mostel.*

and " divided his mantle into four parts," giving " to each soldier a part;" but for " his coat," because it would be spoiled if parted, " it being" weaved " without seam, they cast lots for it."

32. Now Pilate had caused " a title," containing the cause of his death, to be " superscribed," on a table, " in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew," the Hebrew being first, the Greek next, and the Latin nearest to the holy body; but all written after the Jewish manner, from the right hand to the left; for so the title is shown in the church of Santa Croce, in Rome, the Latin letters being to be read as if it were Hebrew; the reason of which I could never find sufficiently discovered, unless it were to make it more legible to the Jews, who, by conversing with the Romans, began to understand a little Latin. The title was, " JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS:" but the Pharisees would have it altered, and " that he said he was King of the Jews." But Pilate, out of wilfulness, or to do despite to the nation, or in honour to Jesus, whom he knew to be a " just person," or being overruled by Divine providence, refused to alter it[e]. " And there were crucified with Jesus two thieves, Jesus being in the midst," according to the prophecy, " He was reckoned with the transgressors." Then Jesus prayed for his persecutors; " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But while Jesus was full of pain and charity, and was praying and dying for his enemies, " the rulers" of the Jews " mocked him," upbraiding him with the good works he did, and the expresses of his power, " saying, He saved others, himself he cannot save;" others saying, " Let him come down from the cross, if he be the King of the Jews, and we will believe in him:" and others, according as their malice was determined, by fancy and occasion, added weight and scorn to his pains; and of the two malefactors that were crucified with him, " one reviled him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." And thus far the devil prevailed, undoing himself in riddle, provoking men to do despite to Christ, and to heighten his passion out of hatred to him; and yet doing and promoting that, which

[e] Proconsulis tabella sententia est, quæ semel lecta neque augeri literâ unâ, neque minui potest; sed utcunque recitata, ita provinciæ instrumento refertur. — *Apul. Flor.* lib. i.

was the ruin of all his own kingdom and potent mischiefs: like the Jew, who, in indignation against Mercury, threw stones at his image, and yet was, by his superior, judged idolatrous, that being the manner of doing honour to the idol among the Gentiles[f]. But then Christ, who had, upon the cross, prayed for his enemies, and was heard of God in all that he desired, felt now the beginnings of success. For the other thief, whom the present pains and circumstances of Jesus' passion had softened and made believing, " reproved" his fellow for " not fearing God," confessed that this death happened " to them deservedly, but to Jesus causelessly:" and then prayed to Jesus, " Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom." Which combination of pious acts and miraculous conversion, Jesus entertained with a speedy promise of a very great felicity, promising, that upon " that very day he should be with him in paradise,"

33. " Now, there were standing by the cross the mother of Jesus, and her sister, and Mary Magdalen, and John." And Jesus, being upon his death bed, although he had no temporal estate to bestow, yet he would make provision for his mother, who, being a widow, and now childless, was likely to be exposed to necessity and want; and, therefore, he did arrogate John, the beloved disciple, into Mary's kindred, making him to be her adopted son, and her to be his mother, by fiction of law: " Woman, behold thy son;" and, " Man, behold thy mother. And from that time forward, John took her home to his own house," which he had near Mount Sion, after he had sold his inheritance in Galilee to the high priest.

34. While these things were doing, the whole frame of nature seemed to be dissolved, and out of order, while their Lord and Creator suffered. For " the sun was so darkened" that the stars appeared; and the eclipse was prodigious in the manner, as well as in degree, because the moon was not then in conjunction, but full: and it was noted by Phlegon, the freed man of the emperor Hadrian, by Lucian, out of the acts of the Gauls, and Dionysius, while he was yet a heathen,

[f] R. Manasses. Vide Dionys. Vossium in Annot. ad Rab. R. Maimon.

excellent scholars all, great historians and philosophers; who also noted the day of the week, and hour of the day, agreeing with the circumstances of the cross[g]. For the sun hid his head from beholding such a prodigy of sin and sadness, and provided a veil for the nakedness of Jesus, that the women might be present, and himself die, with modesty.

35. The eclipse and the passion began "at the sixth hour," and endured "till the ninth," about which time Jesus, being tormented with the unsufferable load of his Father's wrath, due for our sins, and wearied with pains and heaviness, "cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and, as it is thought, repeated the whole two and twentieth psalm, which is an admirable narrative of the passion, full of prayer and sadness, and description of his pains at first, and of eucharist, and joy, and prophecy, at the last. But these first words, which it is certain and recorded that he spake, were in a language of itself, or else, by reason of distance, not understood, for they thought he had "called for Elias," to take him down from the cross. Then Jesus, being in the agonies of a high fever, "said, I thirst. And one ran, and filled a sponge with vinegar, wrapping it with hyssop, and put it on a reed," that he might drink. The vinegar and the sponge were, in executions of condemned persons, set to stop the too violent issues of blood, and to prolong the death[h]; but were exhibited to him in scorn; "mingled with gall," to make the mixture more horrid and ungentle. But "Jesus tasted it" only, and "refused the draught." And now, knowing that the prophecies were fulfilled, his Father's wrath appeased, and his torments satisfactory, he said, "It is finished, and crying with a loud voice, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, he bowed his head, and yielded up his spirit" into the hands of God, and died, hastening to his Father's glories. Thus did this

[g] Origen. cont. Cels. lib. ii. Tertul. Apolog. Lucian. in actis sui Mart. August. Ep. 80. ad Hesychium.

Suidas in Vita Dionys. ait eum dixisse, Aut Deus patitur, aut patienti compatitur: et hac de causa Athenienses erexisse aram ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ aiunt quidam.

[h] Veteres spongiæ conglutinant vulnera. — *Plin. Nat. Hist.* lib. xxxi. c. 11.

Poterit et de misericordia moveri defixus in morsus uncorum, et spongias retiariorum. — *Tertul. de Spect.* c. 25.

glorious Sun set in a sad and clouded west, running speedily to shine in the other world.

36. Then " was the veil of the temple," which separated the secret Mosaic rites from the eyes of the people, " rent in the midst, from the top to the bottom;" and the angels, presidents of the temple, called to each other to depart from their seats[l]; and so great " an earthquake" happened, that " the rocks did rend," the mountains trembled, " the graves opened, and the bodies of dead persons arose, walking," from their cemeteries, " to the holy city, and appeared unto many:" and so great apprehensions and amazements happened to them all that stood by, that they " departed, smiting their breasts with sorrow and fear:" and " the centurion," that ministered at the execution, " said, Certainly this was the Son of God;" and he became a disciple, renouncing his military employment, and died a martyr[k].

37. But because the next day was the " Jews' Sabbath," and a paschal festival besides, the Jews hastened that the bodies should be taken from the cross; and, therefore, sent to Pilate to hasten their death by " breaking their legs[l], that," before sunset[m], " they might be taken away," according to the commandment, and " be buried. The soldiers, therefore, came, and brake the legs of the two thieves; but espying," and wondering, " that Jesus was already dead, they brake not his legs; for the Scripture foretold, that a bone of him should not be broken: but a soldier, with his lance, pierced his side, and immediately there streamed out" two rivulets of " water and blood." But the holy Virgin-mother, (whose soul, during this whole passion, " was pierced with a sword," and sharper sorrows, though she was supported by the comforts of faith, and those holy predictions of his resurrection and future glories, which Mary had laid up in store, against this great day of expense,) now that she saw her holy Son had suffered all that our necessities, and their malice, could require or inflict, caused certain ministers, with whom she joined, to take her dead son from the cross;

[l] S. Hieron. Ep. 150. q. 8.

[k] Apud Metaph. die. 16 Octob.

[l] In hac ipsa genuum commissura quædam buccarum inanitas est, quâ perfossâ, ceu jugulo, spiritus aufugit. — *Plin.* lib. xi. c. 45.

Vide Lactant. lib. i. c. 26. Cic. pro Rosc.

[m] Philo de Leg. Special. Deut. xxi.

whose body, when she once got free from the nails, she kissed, and embraced with entertainments of the nearest vicinity, that could be expressed by a person that was holy and sad, and a mother weeping for her dead son.

38. But she was highly satisfied with her own meditations, that now that great mystery, determined, by Divine predestination, before the beginning of all ages, was fulfilled in her son; and the passion, that must needs be, was accomplished [a]: she, therefore, first bathes his cold body with her warm tears, and makes clean the surface of the wounds, and, delivering a winding napkin to Joseph of Arimathæa, gave to him in charge to enwrap the body, and embalm it, to compose it to the grave, and do it all the rites of funeral, having first exhorted him to a public confession of what he was privately, till now: and he obeyed the counsel of so excellent a person, and ventured upon the displeasure of the Jewish rulers, and "went confidently to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus." And "Pilate gave him" the power of it.

39. "Joseph, therefore, takes the body, binds his face with a napkin," washes the body, anoints it with ointment, enwraps it in a composition of "myrrh and aloes, and puts it into a new tomb, which he, for himself, had hewn out of a rock," (it not being lawful, among the Jews, to inter a condemned person in the common cemeteries:) for all these circumstances were in "the Jews' manner of burying." But when the sun was set, "the chief Priests and Pharisees went to Pilate, telling him that Jesus, whilst he was living, foretold his own resurrection upon the third day; and, lest his disciples should come and steal the body, and say he was risen from the dead," desired that "the sepulchre might be secured" against the danger of any such imposture. Pilate gave them leave to do their pleasure, even to the satisfaction of their smallest scruples. They, therefore, "sealed the grave, rolled a great stone at the mouth of it," and, as an ancient tradition says[o], bound it about with labels of iron, and "set a watch" of soldiers, as if they had intended to have made it surer than the decrees of fate, or the never-failing laws of Nature.

[a] Metaphr. August. 15.

[o] Beda de Locis Sanctis, c. 2. Niceph. lib. i. c. 32.

Ad SECTION XV.

Considerations of some preparatory Accidents before the Entrance of Jesus into his Passion.

1. He that hath observed the story of the life of Jesus, cannot but see it, all the way, to be strewed with thorns and sharp-pointed stones; and although, by the kisses of his feet, they became precious and salutary, yet they procured to him sorrow and disease: it was "meat and drink to him to do his Father's will," but it was "bread of affliction, and rivers of tears to drink;" and, for these, he thirsted like the earth after the cool stream. For so great was his perfection, so exact the conformity of his will, so absolute the subordination of his inferior faculties to the infinite love of God, which sat regent in the court of his will and understanding, that, in this election of accidents, he never considered the taste, but the goodness, never distinguished sweet from bitter, but duty and piety always prepared his table. And, therefore, now knowing that his time, determined by the Father, was nigh, he hastened up to Jerusalem; "he went before" his disciples, saith St. Mark, "and they followed him trembling and amazed;" and yet, before that, even then when his brethren observed he had a design of publication of himself, he suffered them "to go before him, and went up, as it were, in secret." For so we are invited to martyrdom, and suffering in a Christian cause, by so great an example: the holy Jesus is gone before us, and it were a holy contention, to strive whose zeal were forwardest in the designs of humiliation and self-denial; but it were also well, if, in doing ourselves secular advantage, and promoting our worldly interest, we should follow him, who was ever more distant from receiving honours than from receiving a painful death. Those affections, which dwell in sadness, and are married to grief, and lie at the foot of the cross, and trace the sad steps of Jesus, have the wisdom of recollection, the tempers of sobriety, and are the best imitations of Jesus, and securities against the levity of a dispersed and a vain spirit. This was intimated by many of the disciples of Jesus, in the days of the Spirit, and, when they had "tasted of the good

word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" for then we find many ambitious of martyrdom, and that have laid stratagems and designs, by unusual deaths, to get a crown. The soul of St. Lawrence was so scorched with ardent desires of dying for his Lord, that he accounted the coals of his gridiron but as a julep, or the aspersion of cold water, to refresh his soul; they were chill as the Alpine snows, in respect of the heats of his diviner flames. And if these lesser stars shine so brightly, and burn so warmly, what heat of love may we suppose to have been in the Sun of Righteousness? If they went fast toward the crown of martyrdom, yet we know that the Holy Jesus went before them all: no wonder that "he cometh forth as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course."

2. When the disciples had overtaken Jesus, he begins to them a sad homily upon the old text of suffering, which he had, well nigh for a year together, preached upon; but because it was an unpleasing lesson, so contradictory to those interests, upon the hopes of which they had entertained themselves, and spent all their desires, they could by no means understand it: for an understanding, prepossessed with a fancy, or an unhandsome principle, construes all other notions to the sense of the first; and whatsoever contradicts it, we think it an objection, and that we are bound to answer it. But now that it concerned Christ to speak so plainly, that his disciples, by what was to happen within five or six days, might not be scandalized, or believe it happened to Jesus without his knowledge and voluntary entertainment, he tells them of his sufferings, to be accomplished in this journey to Jerusalem. And here the disciples shewed themselves to be but men, full of passion and indiscreet affection; and the bold Galilean, St. Peter, took the boldness to dehort his Master from so great an infelicity; and met with a reprehension so great, that neither the Scribes, nor the Pharisees, nor Herod himself, ever met with its parallel: Jesus called him Satan; meaning, that no greater contradiction can be offered to the designs of God and his holy Son, than to dissuade us from suffering. And if we understood how great are the advantages of a suffering condition, we should think all our daggers gilt, and our pavements strewed with roses, and our halters silken, and the rack an instrument of pleasure,

and be most impatient of those temptations which seduce us into ease, and divorce us from the cross, as being opposite to our greatest hopes and most perfect desires. But still this humour of St. Peter's imperfection abides amongst us: he that breaks off the yoke of obedience, and unties the bands of discipline, and preaches a cheap religion, and presents heaven in the midst of flowers, and strews carpets softer than the Asian luxury in the way, and sets the songs of Sion to the tunes of Persian and lighter airs, and offers great liberty of living, and bondage under affection and sins, and reconciles eternity with the present enjoyment, he shall have his schools filled with disciples; but he that preaches the cross, and the severities of Christianity, and the strictnesses of a holy life, shall have the lot of his blessed Lord; he shall be thought ill of, and deserted.

3. Our blessed Lord, five days before his passion, sent his disciples to a village to borrow an ass, that he might ride in triumph to Jerusalem; he had none of his own; but yet he, who was so dear to God, could not want what was to supply his needs. It may be, God hath laid up our portion in the repositories of other men, and means to furnish us from their tables, to feed us from their granaries, and that their wardrobe shall clothe us; for it is all one to him to make a fish bring us money, or a crow to bring us meat, or the stable of our neighbour to furnish our needs of beasts. If he brings it to thy need as thou wantest it, thou hast all the good in the use of the creature which the owners can receive; and the horse which is lent me in charity does me as much ease, and the bread which is given me in alms feeds me as well, as the other part of it, which the good man, that gave me a portion, reserved for his own eating, could do to him. And if we would give God leave to make provisions for us in the ways of his own choosing, and not estimate our wants by our manner of receiving, being contented that God, by any of his own ways, will minister it to us, we should find our cares eased, and our content increased, and our thankfulness engaged, and all our moderate desires contented, by the satisfaction of our needs. For if God is pleased to feed me by my neighbour's charity, there is no other difference, but that God makes me an occasion of his ghostly good, as he is made the occasion of my temporal; and if we think it disparagement,

we may remember, that God conveys more good to him by me, than to me by him: and it is a proud impatience to refuse or to be angry with God's provisions, because he hath not observed my circumstances and ceremonies of election.

4. And now begins that great triumph, in which the holy Jesus was pleased to exalt his office, and to abase his person. He rode, like a poor man, upon an ass, a beast of burden and the lowest value, and yet it was not his own; and in that equipage he received the acclamations due to a mighty prince, to the Son of the eternal King; telling us, that the smallness of fortune, and the rudeness of exterior habiliments, and a rough wall, are sometimes the outsides of a great glory; and that when God means to glorify or do honour to a person, he needs no help from secular advantages. He hides great riches in renunciation of the world, and makes great honour break forth from the clouds of humility; and victory to arise from yielding, and the modesty of departing from our interest; and peace to be the reward of him, that suffers all the hostilities of men and devils. For Jesus, in this great humility of his, gives a great probation that he was the Messias, and the King of Sion; because no other king entered into those gates riding upon an ass, and received the honour of "Hosannah," in that unlikelihood and contradiction of unequal circumstances.

5. The blessed Jesus had never but two days of triumph in his life; the one was on his transfiguration upon Mount Tabor; the other, this his riding into the holy city. But, that it may appear how little were his joys and present exterior complacencies; in the day of his transfiguration, Moses and Elias appeared to him, telling him what great things he was to suffer; and in this day of his riding to Jerusalem, he wet the palms with a dew sweeter than the moistures upon Mount Hermon, or the drops of manna: for, to allay the little warmth of a springing joy, he let down a shower of tears, weeping over undone Jerusalem in the day of his triumph, leaving it disputable whether he felt more joy or sorrow in the acts of love; for he triumphed to consider that the redemption of the world was so near, and wept bitterly that men would not be redeemed; his joy was great, to consider that himself was to suffer so great sadness for our good; and his sorrow was very great, to consider that we would not

entertain that good, that he brought and laid before us by his passion. He was in figure, as his servant, St. Paphnutius, was afterwards, in letter and true story, "crucified upon palms:" which, indeed, was the emblem of a victory[a]; but yet such as had leaves sharp, poignant, and vexatious. However, he entered into Jerusalem dressed in gaieties, which yet he placed under his feet; but with such pomps and solemnities, each family, according to its proportion, was accustomed to bring the paschal lamb to be slain for the passover: and it was not an indecent ceremony, that "the lamb slain from the beginning of the world" should be brought to his slaughter, with the acknowledgments of a religious solemnity; because, now that real good was to be exhibited to the world, which those little paschal lambs did but signify and represent in shadow: and that was the true cause of all the little joy he had.

6. And if we consider what followed, it might seem also to be a design to heighten the dolorousness of his passion: for to descend from the greatest of worldly honours, from the adoration of a God, and the acclamations to a king, to the death of a slave, and the torments of a cross, and the dishonours of a condemned criminal, were so great stoopings and vast changes, that they gave height, and sense, and excellency to each other. This, then, seemed an excellent glory; but, indeed, was but an art and instrument of grief: for such is the nature of all our felicities, they end in sadness, and increase the sting of sorrows, and add moment to them, and cause impatience and uncomfortable remembrances; but the griefs of a Christian, whether they be instances of repentance, or parts of persecution, or exercises of patience, end in joy and endless comfort. Thus Jesus, like a rainbow, half made of the glories of light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; half triumph, and half sorrow; entered into that town where he had done much good to others, and to himself received nothing but affronts: yet his tenderness increased upon him; and that very journey, which was Christ's last solemn visit for their recovery, he doubled all the instruments of his mercy and their conversion. He rode in triumph; the

[a] Palma est victorum, palmæ tu affixus es; ergò Lætus obi, quoniam non nisi victor obis.

children sang hosannah to him; he cured many diseased persons; he wept for them, and pitied them, and sighed out the intimations of a prayer, and did penance for their ingratitude, and staid all day there, looking about him towards evening; and no man would invite him home, but he was forced to go to Bethany, where he was sure of an hospitable entertainment. I think no Christian that reads this, but will be full of indignation at the whole city; who, for malice or for fear, would not, or durst not, receive their Saviour into their houses; and yet we do worse: for now that he is become our Lord, with mightier demonstrations of his eternal power, we suffer him to look round about upon us for months and years together, and possibly never entertain him, till our house is ready to rush upon our heads, and we are going to unusual and stranger habitations. And yet, in the midst of a populous and mutinous city, this great King had some good subjects; persons that threw away their own garments, and laid them at the feet of our Lord; that, being divested of their own, they might be re-invested with a robe of his righteousness, wearing that till it were changed into a stole of glory: the very ceremony of their reception of the Lord became symbolical to them, and expressive of all our duties.

7. But I consider that the blessed Jesus had affections not less than infinite, towards all mankind; and he who wept upon Jerusalem, who had done so great despite to him, and within five days were to fill up the measure of their iniquities, and do an act, which all ages of the world could never repeat in the same instance, did also, in the number of his tears, reckon our sins, as sad considerations and incentives of his sorrow. And it would well become us to consider what great evil we do, when our actions are such as for which our blessed Lord did weep. He who was seated in the bosom of felicity, yet he moistened his fresh laurels upon the day of his triumph, with tears of love and bitter allay. His day of triumph was a day of sorrow; and if we would weep for our sins, that instance of sorrow would be a day of triumph and jubilee.

8. From hence the holy Jesus went to Bethany, where he had another manner of reception than at the holy city. There he supped; for his goodly day of triumph had been with him a fasting-day. And Mary Magdalen, who had

spent one box of nard pistic upon our Lord's feet, as a sacrifice of eucharist for her conversion, now bestowed another, in thankfulness for the restitution of her brother Lazarus to life, and consigned her Lord unto his burial. And here she met with an evil interpreter. Judas, an apostle, one of the Lord's own family, pretended it had been a better religion to have given it to the poor; but it was malice, and the spirit, either of envy or avarice, in him that passed that sentence; for he that sees a pious action well done, and seeks to undervalue it by telling how it might have been better, reproves nothing but his own spirit. For a man may do very well, and God would accept it; though to say he might have done better, is to say only, that action was not the most perfect and absolute in its kind: but to be angry at a religious person, and without any other pretence but that he might have done better, is spiritual envy; for a pious person would have nourished up that infant action by love and praise, till it had grown to the most perfect and intelligent piety. But the event of that man gave the interpretation of his present purpose; and at the best it could be no other than a rash judgment of the action and intention of a religious, thankful, and holy person. But she found her Lord, who was her beneficiary in this, become her patron and her advocate. And hereafter, when we shall find the devil, the great accuser of God's saints, object against the piety and religion of holy persons; a cup of cold water shall be accepted unto reward, and a good intention heightened to the value of an exterior expression, and a piece of gum to the equality of a holocaust; and an action, done with great zeal and an intense love, be acquitted from all its adherent imperfections; Christ receiving them into himself, and being like the altar of incense, hallowing the very smoke, and raising it into a flame, and entertaining it into the embraces of the firmament and the bosom of heaven. Christ himself, who is the judge of our actions, is also the entertainer and object of our charity and duty, and the advocate of our persons.

9. Judas, who declaimed against the woman, made tacit reflections upon his Lord for suffering it: and, indeed, every obloquy against any of Christ's servants, is looked on as an arrow shot into the heart of Christ himself. And now, a persecution being begun against the Lord within his own family,

another was raised against him from without. For the chief priests " took crafty counsel against Jesus," and called a consistory, to contrive " how they might destroy him :" and here was the greatest representment of the goodness of God and the ingratitude of man, that could be practised or understood. How often had Jesus poured forth tears for them! How many sleepless nights had he awaked, to do them advantage! How many days had he spent in homilies, and admirable visitations of mercy and charity; in casting out devils, in curing their sick, in correcting their delinquencies, in reducing them to the ways of security and peace; and, that we may use the greatest expression in the world, that is, his own, " in gathering them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," to give them strength, and warmth, and life, and ghostly nourishment! And the chief priests, together with their faction, use all arts, and watch all opportunities to get Christ; not that they might possess him, but to destroy him; little considering, that they extinguish their own eyes, and destroy that spring of life, which was intended to them for a blissful immortality.

10. And here it was that the devil shewed his promptness, to furnish every evil-intended person with apt instruments, to act the very worst of his intentions. The devil knew their purposes, and the aptness and proclivity of Judas; and, by bringing these together, he served their present design, and his own great intendment. The devil never fails to promote every evil purpose; and, except where God's restraining grace does intervene and interrupt the opportunity, by interposition of different and cross accidents to serve other ends of Providence, no man easily is fond of wickedness, but he shall receive enough to ruin him. Indeed, Nero and Julian, both witty men and powerful, desired to have been magicians, and could not: and although, possibly, the devil would have corresponded with them, who yet were already his own, in all degrees of security; yet God permitted not that, lest they might have understood new ways of doing despite to martyrs and afflicted Christians. And it concerns us not to tempt God, or invite a forward enemy: for as we are sure the devil is ready to promote all vicious desires, and bring them out to execution; so we are not sure, that God will not permit him; and he that desires to be undone, and cares not to be pre-

vented by God's restraining grace, shall find his ruin in the folly of his own desires, and become wretched by his own election. Judas, hearing of this congregation of the priests, went and offered to betray his Lord, and made a covenant, the price of which was " thirty pieces of silver;" and he returned.

11. It is not intimated in the history of the life of Jesus, that Judas had any malice against the person of Christ; for when, afterwards, he saw the matter was to end in the death of his Lord, he repented: but a base and unworthy spirit of covetousness possessed him; and the relics of indignation, for missing the price of the ointment which the holy Magdalen had poured upon his feet, burnt in his bowels, with a secret, dark, melancholic fire, and made an eruption into an act, which all ages of the world could never parallel. They appointed him for hire thirty pieces, and some say, that every piece did in value equal ten ordinary current deniers; and so Judas was satisfied, by receiving the worth of the three hundred pence, at which he valued the nard pistic. But hereafter, let no Christian be ashamed to be despised and undervalued; for he will hardly meet so great a reproach, as to have so disproportioned a price set upon his life, as was upon the holy Jesus. St. Mary Magdalen thought it not good enough to anneal his sacred feet; Judas thought it a sufficient price for his head: for covetousness aims at base and low purchases, whilst holy love is great and comprehensive as the bosom of heaven, and aims at nothing that is less than infinite. The love of God is a holy fountain, limpid and pure, sweet and salutary, lasting and eternal: the love of money is a vertiginous pool, sucking all into it to destroy it; it is troubled and uneven, giddy and unsafe; serving no end but its own, and that, also, in a restless and uneasy motion. The love of God spends itself upon him, to receive again the reflections of grace and benediction: the love of money spends all its desires upon itself, to purchase nothing but unsatisfying instruments of exchange, or supernumerary provisions, and ends in dissatisfaction, and emptiness of spirit, and a bitter curse. St. Mary Magdalen was defended by her Lord against calumny, and rewarded with an honourable mention to all ages of the church; besides the " unction from above," which she shortly after received, to consign her

to crowns and sceptres: but Judas was described in the Scripture, the book of life, with the black character of death; he was disgraced to eternal ages, and presently after acted his own tragedy with a sad and ignoble death.

12. Now, all things being fitted, our blessed Lord sends two disciples to prepare the Passover, that he might fulfil the law of Moses, and pass from thence to institutions evangelical, and then fulfil his sufferings. Christ gave them a sign to guide them to the house, "a man bearing a pitcher of water;" by which some, that delight in mystical significations, say was typified the sacrament of baptism: meaning, that although, by occasion of the Paschal solemnity, the holy eucharist was first instituted, yet it was afterwards to be applied to practice according to the sense of this accident; only baptized persons were apt suscipients of the other more perfective rite, as the taking nutriment supposes persons born into the world, and within the common conditions of human nature. But, in the letter, it was an instance of the Divine omniscience, who could pronounce concerning accidents at distance, as if they were present: and yet also, like the provision of the colt to ride on, it was an instance of Providence, and security of all God's sons for their portion of temporals. Jesus had not a lamb of his own, and possibly no money in the bags to buy one: and yet Providence was his guide, and the charity of a good man was his *proveditore*, and he found excellent conveniences in the entertainments of a hospitable good man, as if he had dwelt in Ahab's ivory house, and had had the riches of Solomon, and the meat of his household.

THE PRAYER.

O holy King of Sion, eternal Jesus, who, with great humility and infinite love, didst enter into the holy city, riding upon an ass, that thou mightest verify the predictions of the prophets, and give example of meekness, and of the gentle and paternal government which the eternal Father laid upon thy shoulders; be pleased, dearest Lord, to enter into my soul with triumph, trampling over all thine enemies: and give me grace to entertain thee with joy and adoration, with abjection of my own desires, with

lopping off all my superfluous branches of a temporal condition, and spending them in the offices of charity and religion, and divesting myself of all my desires, laying them at thy holy feet, that I may bear the yoke and burden of the Lord with alacrity, with love, and the wonders of a satisfied and triumphant spirit. Lord, enter in, and take possession; and thou, to whose honour the very stones would give testimony, make my stony heart an instrument of thy praises; let me strew thy way with flowers of virtue, and the holy rosary of Christian graces: and, by thy aid and example, let us also triumph over all our infirmities and hostilities, and then lay our victories at thy feet, and at last follow thee into thy heavenly Jerusalem with palms in our hands, and joy in our hearts, and eternal acclamations on our lips, rejoicing in thee, and singing Hallelujahs in a happy eternity to thee, O holy King of Sion, eternal Jesus. Amen.

II.

O blessed and dear Lord, who wert pleased to permit thyself to be sold to the assemblies of evil persons for a vile price by one of thy own servants, for whom thou hadst done so great favours, and hadst designed a crown and a throne to him, and he turned himself into a sooty coal, and entered into the portion of evil angels; teach us to value thee above all the joys of men, to prize thee at an estimate beyond all the wealth of nature, to buy wisdom, and not to sell it, to part with all, that we may enjoy thee: and let no temptation abuse our understandings, no loss vex us into impatience, no frustration of hope fill us with indignation, no pressure of calamitous accidents make us angry at thee, the fountain of love and blessing, no covetousness transport us into the suburbs of hell, and the regions of sin; but make us to love thee as well as ever any creature loved thee, that we may never burn in any fires but of a holy love, nor sink in any inundation but what proceeds from penitential showers, and suffer no violence but of implacable desires to live with thee, and, when thou callest us, to suffer with thee, and for thee.

III.

Lord, let me never be betrayed by myself, or any violent accident and importunate temptation; let me never be sold for the vile price of temporal gain, or transient pleasure, or a pleasant dream; but, since thou hast bought me with a price, even then when thou wert sold thyself, let me never be separated from thy possession. I am thine, bought with a price; Lord, save me; and in the day when thou bindest up thy jewels, remember, Lord, that I cost thee as dear as any, and therefore cast me not into the portion of Judas: but let me walk, and dwell, and bathe in the field of thy blood, and pass from hence, pure and sanctified, into the society of the elect apostles, receiving my part with them, and my lot in the communications of thy inheritance, O gracious Lord and dearest Saviour, Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Washing of the Disciples' Feet by Jesus, and his Sermon of Humility[a].

1. THE holy Jesus went now to eat his last Paschal supper, and to finish the work of his legation, and to fulfil that part of the law of Moses in every of its smallest and most minute particularities, in which also the actions were significant of spiritual duties: which we may transfer from the letter to the spirit in our own instances, That as Jesus ate the Paschal lamb with a staff in his hand, with his loins girt, with sandals on his feet, in great haste, with unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs; so we also should do all our services according to the signification of these symbols, leaning upon the cross of Jesus for a staff, and bearing the rod of his government, with loins girt with angelical chastity, with shoes on our feet, that so we may guard and have custody over our affections, and "be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace," eating in haste, as becomes persons "hungering and thirsting after righteousness," doing the work of the Lord zealously

[a] Ad. Num. 16.

and fervently, without the leaven of malice and secular interest, with bitter herbs of self-denial and mortification of our sensual and inordinate desires. The sense and mystery of the whole act, with all its circumstances, is, That we obey all the sanctions of the Divine law, and that every part of our religion be pure and peaceable, chaste and obedient, confident in God and diffident in ourselves, frequent and zealous, humble and resigned, just and charitable; and there will not easily be wanting any just circumstance to hallow and consecrate the action.

2. When the holy Jesus had finished his last Mosaic rite, he descends to give example of the first fruit of evangelical graces: "he rises from supper, lays aside his garment" like a servant, and, with all the circumstances of an humble ministry, "washes the feet of his disciples[b]," beginning at the first, St. Peter, until he came to Judas, the traitor; that we might, in one scheme, see a rare conjunction of charity and humility, of self-denial and indifferency, represented by a person glorious and great, their Lord and Master, sad and troubled. And he chose to wash their feet[c] rather than their head, that he might have the opportunity of a more humble posture, and a more apt signification of his charity. Thus God lays every thing aside, that he may serve his servants; heaven stoops to earth, and one abyss calls upon another, and the miseries of man, which were next to infinite, are excelled by a mercy equal to the immensity of God. And this washing of their feet, which was an accustomed civility and entertainment of honoured strangers at the beginning of their meal, Christ deferred to the end of the Paschal supper, that it might be the preparatory to the second, which he intended should be festival to all the world. St. Peter was troubled that the hands of his Lord should wash his servants' feet, those hands which had opened the eyes of the blind, and cured lepers, and healed all diseases, and, when lift up to heaven, were omnipotent, and could restore life to dead and buried persons; he counted it a

[b] Λούσθαι ἐκ πρώτου μεταπύμενος ἄλλον ἀπ' ἄλλου, Ἀρχόμενος Σίμωνος, ἵνος ἴδοιο φανῆος. — *Nonn.*

[c] Idcirco pedes potiùs quàm manus et caput; quia in lavandis pedibus, et affectuosior est gestus humilitatis, et propinquior significatio charitatis, quâ nos lavat sanguine suo à peccatis nostris. — *Rupert.*

great indecency for him to suffer it: but it was no more than was necessary, for they had but lately been earnest in dispute for precedency; and it was of itself so apt to swell into tumour and inconvenience, that it was not to be cured but by some prodigy of example and miracle of humility, which the holy Jesus offered to them in this express, calling them to learn some great lesson; a lesson which God descended from heaven to earth, from riches to poverty, from essential innocence to the disreputation of a sinner, from a master to a servant, to learn us, that is, that we should esteem ourselves but just as we are, low, sinful, miserable, needy, and unworthy. It seems it is a great thing that man should come to have just and equal thoughts of himself, that God used such powerful arts to transmit this lesson, and engrave it in the spirits of men; and if the receipt fails, we are eternally lost in the mists of vanity, and enter into the condition of those angels, whom pride transformed and spoiled into the condition of devils: and upon consideration of this great example, Guericus, a good man, cried out, "Thou hast overcome, O Lord, thou hast overcome my pride; this example hath mastered me; I deliver myself up into thy hands, never to receive liberty or exaltation but in the condition of thy humblest servant[d]."

3. And to this purpose St. Bernard hath an affectionate and devout consideration, saying, "That some of the angels, as soon as they were created, had an ambition to become like God, and to aspire into the throne which God had appointed to the holy Jesus in eternal ages. When God created man, presently the devil rubbed his leprosy upon him, and he would needs be like God too, and Satan promised him that he should. As the evil angels would have been like to God in power and majesty, so man would have been like him in knowledge, and have imitated the wisdom of the eternal Father. But man had the fate of Gehazi; he would needs have the talent and garments of Lucifer, and he had also his plague; he lost paradise for his pride. And now, what might befit the Son of God to do, seeing man so lost, and God so zealous of his honour? I see (saith he) that, by occasion of me, the Father loses his creatures, for they

[d] Quomodo non humiliabitur homo sub tam humili Deo?—*S. Bernard.*

have all aspired to be like me, and are fallen into the greatest infelicities. Behold, I will go towards man in such a form, that whosoever from henceforth would become like me, shall be so, and be a gainer by it. And for this cause the Son of God came from heaven, and made himself a poor humble person, and, by all the actions of his life, commented upon the present discourse: 'Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart[e].'" Blessed be that mercy and bounty which moved Almighty God to condescend to that so great appetite we had of being like him; for now we may be like unto God, but it must be by humility, of which he hath given us an example powerful as miracles, and great as our own pride and misery.

4. And, indeed, our blessed Lord, knowing that examples are like maps and perfect schemes, in which the whole continent may at once be represented to the eye to all the purposes of art and benefit, did, in the latter end of his life, draw up the dispersions and larger harvest of his precepts, binding them in the bundle of great examples, and casting them into actions as into sums total: for so this act of washing the feet of his own ministers, and then dying for them, and for all his enemies, did preach the three great sums of evangelical perfection with an admirable energy and abbreviature; humility, and charity, and sufferings, being to Christianity as the body, and the soul, and the spirit, are to the whole man. For no man brings a sad funeral into the theatre to make his spectators merry, nor can well preach chastity in the impurity of the Bordelli, or persuade temperance when himself is full of wine and luxury[f], and enters into the baths to boil his undigested meat, that he may return to his second supper, and breathes forth impure belchings together with his homily; a poor Eremite, or a severely-living philosopher, into whose life his own precepts have descended, and his doctrine is mingled with his soul, mingles also effect and virtue with homilies, and incorporates his doctrine in the hearts of his disciples. And this the holy Jesus did in his own person, bearing the burden first upon his own shoulders, that we may, with better alacrity, undergo what our blessed Lord bears with us, and

[e] Matt. xi. 29.

[f] Turgidus hic epulis, atque albo ventre lavatur,
Gutture sulphureas lentè exhalante Mephites.—*Pers. Sat. 3.*

for us. But that we may the better understand what our blessed Lord designed to us in this lecture, let us consider the proper acts of humility which integrate the virtue.

5. The first is, "Christ's humble man thinks meanly of himself:" and there is great reason every man should. For his body is but rottenness and infirmity covered with a fair mantle, a dunghill overcast with snow: and if we consider sadly, that from trees and plants come oil, balsam, wine, spices, and aromatic odours, and that from the sinks of our body no such sweet or salutary emanations are observed, we may at least think it unreasonable to boast our beauty, which is nothing but a clear and well-coloured skin, which every thing in the world can spoil; nor our strength, which an ague tames into the infirmities of a child, and in which we are excelled by a bull; nor any thing of our body, which is nothing but an unruly servant of the soul, marked with characters of want and dependence, and begging help from all the elements, and, upon a little disturbance, growing troublesome to itself by its own impurities. And yet there is no reason in respect of the soul for any man to exalt himself above his brother; because all reasonable souls are equal; and that one is wise, and another is foolish or less learned, is by accident and extrinsic causes: God at first makes all alike; but an indisposed body, or an inopportune education, or evil customs, superinduce variety and difference. And if God discerns a man from his brother by distinction of gifts, it alters not the case; still the man hath nothing of himself that can call him excellent: it is as if a wall, upon which the sun reflects, should boast itself against another that stands in the shadow. Greater glory is to be paid to God for the discerning gifts; but to take any of it to ourselves, and rise higher than our brother, or advance our own opinion, is as if a man should be proud of being in debt, and think it the greater excellency that he is charged with heavier and more severe accounts.

6. This act consists not in declamations and forms of satire[s] against ourselves, saying, I am a miserable, sinful creature; I am proud, or covetous, or ignorant: for many

[s] Auferantur omnia figmenta verborum, cessent simulati gestus, verum humilem patientia ostendit.—*S. Hier.*

men say so, that are not willing to be thought so. Neither is humility a virtue made up of wearing old clothes, or doing servile and mean employments by voluntary undertaking, or of sullen gestures, or demiss behaviour, and artifice of lowly expressions: for these may become snares to invite and catch at honour; and then they are collateral designs of pride, and direct actions of hypocrisy. But it consists in a true understanding of our own condition, and a separating our own nothing from the good we have received, and giving to God all the glory, and taking to ourselves all the shame and dishonour due to our sinful condition. He that thinks himself truly miserable, and vilified by sin, hates it perfectly; and he that knows himself to be nothing, cannot be exalted in himself: and whatsoever is besides these two extremes of a natural nothing and a superadded sin, must be those good things we have received, which, because they derive from God, must make all their returns thither. But this act is of greater difficulty in persons pious, full of gifts, and eminent in graces, who, being fellow-workers together with God, sometimes grow tacitly, and without notice, given to confide in themselves, and with some freer fancy ascribe too much of the good action to their own choice and diligence, and take up their crowns, which lie at the foot of the throne, and set them upon their own heads. For a sinner to desire to be esteemed a sinner, is no more humility, than it is for the son of a ploughman to confess his father; but, indeed, it is hard for a man to be cried up for a saint, to walk upon the spire of glory, and to have no adherence or impure mixtures of vanity grow upon the outside of his heart. All men have not such heads as to walk in great heights, without giddiness, and unsettled eyes: Lucifer, and many angels, walking upon the battlements of heaven, grew top-heavy, and fell into the state of devils; and the father of the Christian Eremites, St. Antony[h], was frequently attempted by the devil, and solicited to vanity, the devil usually making fantastic noises to be heard before him, "Make room for the saint and servant of God;" but the good man knew Christ's voice to be a low base of humility, and that it was the noise of hell that invited to complacencies and vanity; and therefore took the

[h] S. Hier. in Vita S. Anton.

example of the apostles, who, in the midst of the greatest reputation and spiritual advancements, were dead unto the world, and seemed to live in the state of separation. For, the true stating our own question, and knowing ourselves, must needs represent us set in the midst of infinite imperfections, laden with sins, choked with the noises of a polluted conscience, persons fond of trifles, neglecting objects fit for wise men, full of ingratitude, and all such things, which in every man else we look upon as scars and deformities, and which we use to single out, and take one alone as sufficient to disgrace and disrepute all the excellencies of our neighbour; but, if we would esteem them with the same severity in ourselves, and remember with how many such objections our little felicities are covered, it would make us charitable in our censures, compassionate and gentle to others, apt to excuse, and as ready to support their weaknesses, and in all accidents and chances to ourselves to be content and thankful, as knowing the worst of poverty and inconvenience to be a mercy, and a splendid fortune, in respect of our demerits. I have read, that "when the duke of Candia had voluntarily entered into the incommodities of a religious poverty and retirement, he was one day spied, and pitied by a lord of Italy, who, out of tenderness, wished him to be more careful and nutritive of his person. The good duke answered, 'Sir, be not troubled, and think not that I am ill provided of conveniences; for I send a harbinger before, who makes my lodgings ready, and takes care that I be royally entertained.' The lord asked him, who was his harbinger? He answered, 'The knowledge of myself, and the consideration of what I deserve for my sins, which is eternal torments; and when, with this knowledge, I arrive at my lodging, how unprovided soever I find it, methinks it is ever better than I deserve.'" The sum of this meditation consists in believing, and considering, and reducing to practice those thoughts, that we are nothing of ourselves, that we have nothing of our own, that we have received more than ever we can discharge, that we have added innumerable sins, that we can call nothing our own but such things which we are ashamed to own, and such things which are apt to ruin us. If we do nothing contrary to the purpose and hearty persuasion of such thoughts, then we think meanly of ourselves; and, in

order to it, we may make use of this advice, to let no day pass, without some sad recollection and memory of somewhat which may put us to confusion, and mean opinion of ourselves; either call to mind the worst of our sins, or the indiscreetest of our actions, or the greatest of our shame, or the uncivilest of our affronts — any thing to make us descend lower, and kiss the foot of the mountain. And this consideration, applied also to every tumour of spirit as soon as it rises, may possibly allay it.

7. Secondly, "Christ's humble man bears contumelies evenly and sweetly, and desires not to be honoured by others[i];" he chooses to do those things that deserve honour and a fair name; but then eats not of those fruits himself, but transmits them to the use of others, and the glories of God. This is a certain consequence of the other; for he that truly disesteems himself, is content that others should do so too; and he who, with some regret and impatience, hears himself scorned or undervalued, hath not acquired the grace of humility: which Serapion, in Cassian, noted to a young person, who perpetually accused himself with the greatest semblances of humility, but was impatient when Serapion reproved him[k]. "Did you hope that I would have praised your humility, and have reputed you for a saint? It is a strange perverseness, to desire others to esteem highly of you for that in which to yourself you seem most unworthy." He that inquires into the faults of his own actions, requiring them that saw them to tell him in what he did amiss, not to learn the fault, but to engage them to praise it, cozens himself into pride, and makes humility the instrument. And a man would be ashamed, if he were told that he used stratagems for praise; but so glorious a thing is humility, that pride, to hide her own shame, puts on the other's vizor; it being more to a proud man's purposes to seem humble, than to be so. And such was the cynic whom Lucian derided, because that one searching his scrip, in expectation to have found in it mouldy bread, or old rags, he

[i] Ama nesciri et pro nihilo reputari. — *Gerson.*

[k] Appetere de humilitate laudem humilitatis non est virtus, sed subversio. Quid enim perversum magis aut indignius, quam ut indè velis haberi melior, unde tibi videris deterior. — *S. Bernard.*

Est qui nequiter humiliat se, et interiora ejus sunt plena dolo. — *Eccles.* xii. 11.

discovered a bale of dice, a box of perfumes, and the picture of his fair mistress. Carisianus walked in his gown in the feast of Saturn, and, when all Rome was let loose in wantonness, he put on the long robe of a senator, and a severe person; and yet nothing was more lascivious than he[l]. But the devil, pride, prevails sometimes upon the spirit of lust. Humility neither directly, nor by consequence, seeks for praise, and suffers it not to rest upon its own pavement, but reflects it all upon God, and receives all lessenings and instruments of affront and disgrace, that mingle not with sin or indecencies, more willingly than panegyrics. When others have their desires, thou not thine; the sayings of another are esteemed, thine slighted; others ask and obtain, thou beggest and art refused; they are cried up, thou disgraced and hissed at; and, while they are employed, thou art laid by, as fit for nothing; or an unworthy person commands thee, and rules thee like a tyrant; he reproves thee, suspects thee, reviles thee: canst thou bear this sweetly, and entertain the usage as thy just portion, and as an accident most fit and proper to thy person and condition? Dost thou not raise theatres to thyself, and take delight in the suppletories of thy own good opinion, and the flatteries of such whom thou endearest to thee, that their praising thee should heal the wounds of thine honour by an imaginary and fantastic restitution? He that is not content and patient in affronts, hath not yet learned humility of the holy Jesus.

8. Thirdly, As Christ's humble man is content in affronts, and not greedy of praise; so, when it is presented to him, he takes no contentment in it: and, if it be easy to want praise when it is denied, yet it is harder not to be delighted with it when it is offered. But there is much reason that we should put restraints upon ourselves, lest, if we be praised without desert, we find a greater judgment of God[m]; or, if we have done well, and received praise for it, we lose all our reward, which God hath deposited for them that "receive" not "their good things in this life." For "as silver is tried in

[l] Nil lascivius est Carisiano;
In Saturnalibus ambulat togatus. — *Mart.*

[m] Tantâ enim consideratione trepidat *(David,)* nè aut de his in quibus laudatur, et non sunt, majus Dei judicium inveniat; aut de his in quibus laudatur, et sunt, competens præmium perdat. — *S. Greg.*

the melter, and gold in the crucible, so is a man tried by the mouth of him that praises him :" that is, he is either clarified from his dross, by looking upon the praise as a homily to teach, and an instrument to invite his duty; or else, if he be already pure, he is consolidated, strengthened in the sobriety of his spirit, and retires himself closer into the strengths and securities of humility. Nay, this step of humility uses, in very holy persons, to be enlarged to a delight in affronts and disreputation in the world. " Now I begin to be Christ's disciple," said Ignatius the Martyr, when, in his journey to Rome, he suffered perpetual revilings and abuse. St. Paul " rejoiced in his infirmities and reproach:" and all the apostles at Jerusalem went from the tribunal, " rejoicing that they were esteemed worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus[n]." This is an excellent condition and degree of humility. But I choose to add one that is less, but, in all persons, necessary.

9. Fourthly: " Christ's humble man is careful never to speak any thing that may redound to his own praise," unless it be with a design of charity or duty, that either God's glory, or the profit of his neighbour, be concerned in it; but never speaking with a design to be esteemed learned or honourable. St. Arsenius had been tutor to three Cæsars, Theodosius, Arcadius, and Honorius; but afterwards, when he became religious, no word escaped him that might represent and tell of his former greatness: and it is observable, concerning St. Jerome, that although he was of noble extraction, yet, in all his own writings, there is not the smallest intimation of it. This I desire to be understood only to the sense and purposes of humility, and that we have no designs of vanity and fancy in speaking learnedly, or recounting our exterior advantges: but if either the profit of our brother, or the glory of God; if either there be piety or charity in the design, it is lawful to publish all those excellences with which God hath distinguished us from others. The young marquess of Castilion, being to do public exercise in his course of philosophy, made it a case of conscience whether he were bound to dispute his best, fearing lest vanity might transport him in the midst of those praises, which his col-

[n] Acts, v. 41.

legiates might give him. It was an excellent consideration in the young gentleman: but, in actions civil and humane, since the danger is not so immediate, and a little complacency, becoming the instrument of virtue, and encouragement of studies, may, with like care, be referred to God, as the giver, and celebrate his praises; he might, with more safety, have done his utmost, it being, in some sense, a duty to encourage others, to give account of our graces and our labours, and all the appendant vanity may quickly be suppressed. A good name may give us opportunity of persuading others to their duty, especially in an age in which men choose their doctrines by the men that preach them: and St. Paul used his liberty when he was zealous for his Corinthian disciples, but restrained himself when it began to make reflections upon his own spirit. But although a good name be necessary, and in order to such good ends whither it may serve, it is lawful to desire it; yet a great name, and a pompous honour, and secular greatness, hath more danger in it to ourselves, than, ordinarily, it can have of benefit to others; and although a man may use the greatest honours to the greatest purposes, yet ordinary persons may not safely desire them; because it will be found very hard to have such mysterious and abstracted considerations, as to separate all our proper interest from the public end. To which I add this consideration, That the contempt of honour, and the instant pursuit of humility, is more effective of the ghostly benefit of others, than honours and great dignities can be, unless it be rarely and very accidentally.

10. If we need any new incentives to the practice of this grace, I can say no more, but that humility is truth, and pride is a lie; that the one glorifies God, the other dishonours him; humility makes men like angels, pride makes angels to become devils; that pride is folly, humility is the temper of a holy spirit and excellent wisdom; that humility is the way to glory, pride to ruin and confusion: humility makes saints on earth, pride undoes them: humility beatifies the saints in heaven, and "the elders throw their crowns at the foot of the throne;" pride disgraces a man among all the societies of earth: God loves one, and Satan solicits the cause of the other, and promotes his own interest in it most of all. And there is no one grace, in which Christ pro-

pounded himself imitable so signally as in this of meekness and humility: for the enforcing of which, he undertook the condition of a servant, and a life of poverty, and a death of disgrace; and washed the feet of his disciples, and even of Judas himself, that his action might be turned into a sermon, to preach this duty, and to make it as eternal as his own story.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who wert pleased to lay aside the glories and incomprehensible majesty, which clothed thy infinity from before the beginning of creatures, and didst put on a cloud upon thy brightness, and wert invested with the impure and imperfect broken robe of human nature, and didst abate those splendors which broke through the veil, commanding devils not to publish thee, and men not to proclaim thy excellences, and the apostles not to reveal those glories of thine, which they discovered encircling thee, upon Mount Tabor, in thy transfiguration, and didst, by perpetual homilies, and symbolical mysterious actions, as with deep characters, engrave humility into the spirits of thy disciples, and the discipline of Christianity; teach us to approach near to these, thy glories, which thou hast so covered with a cloud, that we might, without amazement, behold thy excellences; make us to imitate thy gracious condescensions; take from us all vanity and fantastic complacencies in our own persons or actions; and, when there arises a reputation consequent to the performance of any part of our duty, make us to reflect the glory upon thee, suffering nothing to adhere to our own spirits but shame at our own imperfection, and thankfulness to thee for all thy assistances: let us never seek the praise of men from unhandsome actions, from flatteries and unworthy discourses, nor entertain the praise with delight, though it proceed from better principles; but fear and tremble, lest we deserve punishment, or lose a reward, which thou hast deposited for all them that seek thy glory, and despise their own, that they may imitate the example of their Lord. Thou, O Lord, didst triumph over sin and death; subdue, also, my proud

understanding, and my prouder affections, and bring me under thy yoke; that I may do thy work, and obey my superiors, and be a servant of all my brethren in their necessities, and esteem myself inferior to all men by a deep sense of my own unworthiness, and in all things may obey thy laws, and conform to thy precedents, and enter into thine inheritance, O holy and eternal Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIX.

Of the Institution and Reception of the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

1. As the sun, among the stars, and man, among the sublunary creatures, is the most eminent and noble, the prince of the inferiors, and their measure, or their guide: so is this action, among all the instances of religion; it is the most perfect and consummate, it is an union of mysteries, and a consolidation of duties; it joins God and man, and confederates all the societies of men in mutual complexions, and the entertainments of an excellent charity; it actually performs all that could be necessary for man, and it presents to man as great a thing as God could give; for it is impossible any thing should be greater than himself. And when God gave his Son to the world, it could not be but he should give us all things else: and, therefore, this blessed sacrament is a consigning us to all felicities, because, after a mysterious and ineffable manner, we receive him, who is light and life, the fountain of grace, and the sanctifier of our secular comforts, and the author of holiness and glory. But as it was at first, so it hath been ever since; "Christ came into the world, and the world knew him not:" so Christ hath remained in the world, by the communications of this sacrament, and yet he is not rightly understood, and less truly valued. But Christ may say to us, as once to the woman of Samaria, "Woman, if thou didst know the gift of God, and who it is that speaks to thee, thou wouldst ask him:" so, if we were so wise, or so fortunate, to know the excellency of this gift of the Lord, it would fill us full of wonder and adoration, joy

and thankfulness, great hopes and actual felicities, making us heirs of glory, by the great additions and present increment of grace.

2. "After supper Jesus took bread, and blessed it," and made it to be a heavenly gift: he gave them "bread," and told them it was "his body;" that body, which was broken for the redemption of man, for the salvation of the world. St. Paul calls it "bread," even after consecration; "the bread which we break, is it not the communication of the body of Christ[a]?" So that, by Divine faith, we are taught to express our belief of this mystery, in these words: The bread, when it is consecrated and made sacramental, is the body of our Lord; and the fraction and distribution of it is the communication of that body, which died for us upon the cross. He that doubts of either of the parts of this proposition must either think Christ was not able to verify his word, and to make "bread," by his benediction, to become to us to be "his body;" or that St. Paul did not well interpret and understand this mystery, when he called it "bread." Christ reconciles them both, calling himself "the bread of life:" and if we be offended at it, because it is "alive," and, therefore, less apt to become food, we are invited to it because it is "bread;" and if the sacrament, to others, seem less mysterious, because it is "bread," we are heightened in our faith and reverence, because it is "life:" the bread of the sacrament is the life of our soul, and the body of our Lord is now conveyed to us, by being the bread of the sacrament. And if we consider how easy it is to faith, and how impossible it seems to curiosity, we shall be taught confidence and modesty; a resigning our understanding to the voice of Christ and his apostles, and yet expressing our own articles, as Christ did, in indefinite significations. And, possibly, it may not well consist with our duty to be inquisitive into the secrets of the kingdom, which we see, by plain event, hath divided the church almost as much as the sacrament hath united it, and which can only serve the purposes of the school, and of evil men, to make questions for that, and factions for these, but promote not the ends of a holy life, obedience, or charity.

[a] 1 Cor. x. 16.

3. Some so observe the literal sense of the words, that they understand them also in a natural: some so alter them, by metaphors and preternatural significations, that they will not understand them at all in a proper. We see it, we feel it, we taste it, and we smell it to be bread; and, by philosophy, we are led into a belief of that substance, whose accidents these are, as we are to believe that to be fire, which burns, and flames, and shines: but Christ also affirmed, concerning it, "This is my body;" and if faith can create an assent as strong as its object is infallible, or can be as certain in its conclusion, as sense is certain in its apprehensions, we must, at no hand, doubt but that it is Christ's body. Let the sense of that be what it will, so that we believe those words, and (whatsoever that sense is which Christ intended,) that we no more doubt in our faith than we do in our sense; then our faith is not reprovable. It is hard to do so much violence to our sense, as not to think it "bread;" but it is more unsafe to do so much violence to our faith, as not to believe it to be "Christ's body." But it would be considered, that no interest of religion, no saying of Christ, no reverence of opinion, no sacredness of the mystery, is disavowed, if we believe both what we hear and what we see. He that believes it to be "bread," and yet verily to be "Christ's body," is only tied also, by implication, to believe God's omnipotence, that he, who affirmed it, can also verify it. And they, that are forward to believe the change of substance, can intend no more, but that it be believed verily to be the body of our Lord. And if they think it impossible to reconcile its being bread with the verity of being Christ's body, let them remember that themselves are put to more difficulties, and to admit of more miracles, and to contradict more sciences, and to refuse the testimony of sense, in affirming the special manner of transubstantiation. And, therefore, it were safer to admit the words in their first sense, in which we shall no more be at war with reason, nor so much with sense, and not at all with faith[b]. And, for persons of the

[b] Acceptum panem et distributum discipulis corpus suum illum fecit, Hoc est corpus meum, dicendo, id est, figura corporis mei. Figura autem non fuisset, nisi veritatis esset corpus. — *Tertul.* lib. iv. *contr. Marcion.* c. 40.

Quòd si quicquid ingreditur in os, in ventrem abit, et in secessum ejicitur, et ille cibus qui sanctificatur per verbum Dei perque obsecrationem, juxta

contradictory persuasion, who, to avoid the natural sense, affirm it only to be figurative, since their design is only to make this sacrament to be Christ's body in the sense of faith, and not of philosophy, they may remember, that its being really present does not hinder but that all that reality may be spiritual; and if it be Christ's body, so it be not affirmed

id quod habet materiale, in ventrem abit, et in secessum ejicitur, et ille cibus qui sanctificatur per verbum Dei perque obsecrationem, juxta id quod habet materiale, in ventrem abit, et in secessum ejicitur, &c. et hæc quidem de typico symbolicoque corpore. — *Origen. in* c. 15. *S. Matt.*

Τὰ σύμβολα τοῦ σώματος τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος μετὰ τὴν ἐπίκλησιν ἐπιβάλλεται, καὶ ἕτερα γίνεται, ἀλλ' οὐκ οἰκείας ἐξίσταται φύσεως· μένει γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς προτέρας οὐσίας, καὶ τοῦ σχήματος, καὶ τοῦ εἴδους, καὶ ὁρατά ἐστι, καὶ ἁπτά, οἷα καὶ πρότερον ἦν. — *Theod. Dial.* 2.

Idem disputando contra Eutychianos, docentes humanam Christi naturam conversum iri in divinam, eodem scil. modo quo panis in corpus Christi, ait, Certè eodem scil. modo, hoc est, nullo.

Ὁ δὲ σωτὴρ ὁ ἡμέτερος, &c. Our blessed Saviour, who hath called himself the living Bread and a Vine, hath also honoured the visible signs with the title and appellation of his Body and Blood, not changing their nature, but adding to nature, grace. — *See the Dialog. called " the Immoveable."*

Sacramenta quæ sumimus corporis et sanguinis Christi, divina res est. Propter quod per eadem Divinæ efficimur consortes naturæ, et tamen non desinit esse substantia vel natura panis et vini; et certè imago et similitudo corporis et sanguinis Christi in actione mysteriorum celebrantur. — *P. Gelasius, libr. contr. Nestorium et Eutychetem.*

Non quòd propriè corpus ejus sit panis, et poculum sanguis; sed quòd mysterium corporis ejus sanguinisque contineant. — *Facundus.*

Si nam sacramenta quandam similitudinem non haberent earum rerum, quarum sunt sacramenta, omnino sacramenta non essent: ex hac autem similitudine plerumque ipsarum rerum nomina accipiunt. — *S. Aug. Epist.* 23.

Quod ab omnibus appellatur sacrificium, signum est veri sacrificii, in quo caro Christi post assumptionem per sacramentum memoriæ celebratur. — *Idem contr. Faustum Manich.* lib. x. c. 2.

Apud Gratianum de Consecrat. dist. 2. c. 48, citatur Augustinus in libro Sententiarum Prosperi in hæc verba: " Sicut ergò cœlestis panis, qui Christi caro est, suo modo vocatur corpus Christi, cùm reverâ sit sacramentum corporis Christi, illius viz. quod visibile, quod palpabile, mortale in cruce positum est; vocaturque ipsa immolatio carnis, quæ sacerdotis manibus fit Christi passio, mors, crucifixio, non rei veritate, sed significante mysterio: sic sacramentum fidei quod baptismus intelligitur, fides est."

Si ergò hæc vasa sanctificata ad privatos usus transferre sic periculosum est, in quibus non est verum corpus Christi, sed mysterium corporis ejus continetur; quantò magis vasa corporis nostri, &c. — *S. Chrysost. Opere Imperf. in Matt.*

Sicut nam antequam sanctificetur panis, panem nominamus, divinâ autem illum sanctificante gratiâ, mediante sacerdote, liberatus quidem est ab appellatione panis, dignus autem habitus est Dominici corporis appellatione, etiamsi natura panis in eo permansit, &c. — *Idem in Epist. ad Cæsarium, in Biblioth. Pp. Colon.* 1618.

such in a natural sense and manner, it is still only the object of faith and spirit; and if it be affirmed only to be spiritual, there is then no danger to faith in admitting the words of Christ's institution, "This is my body." I suppose it to be a mistake, to think whatsoever is real must be natural; and it is no less to think spiritual to be only figurative: that is too much, and this is too little. Philosophy and faith may well be reconciled; and whatsoever objection can invade this union may be cured by modesty. And if we profess we understand not the manner of this mystery, we say no more but that it is a mystery; and if it had been necessary we should have construed it into the most latent sense, Christ himself would have given a clavis, and taught the church to unlock so great a secret. Christ said, "This is my body, this is my blood:" St. Paul said, "The bread of blessing that we break is the communication of the body of Christ, and the chalice which we bless is the communication of the blood of Christ[c];" and "We are all one body, because we eat of one bread[d]." One proposition, as well as the other, is the matter of faith, and the latter of them is also of sense; one is as literal as the other: and he that distinguishes in his belief, as he may place the impropriety upon which part he please, and either say it is improperly called "bread," or improperly called "Christ's body;" so he can have nothing to secure his proposition from error, or himself from boldness, in decreeing, concerning mysteries, against the testimonies of sense, or beyond the modesty and simplicity of Christian faith. Let us love and adore the abyss of Divine wisdom and goodness, and entertain the sacrament with just and holy receptions; and then we shall receive all those fruits of it, which an earnest disputer, or a peremptory dogmatizer, whether he happen right or wrong, hath no warrant to expect upon the interest of his opinion.

4. In the institution of this sacrament, Christ manifested, first, his almighty power; secondly, his infinite wisdom; and, thirdly, his unspeakable charity. First, his power is mani-

[c] 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

[d] Chrysost. notat Apostolum non dixisse panem esse μετοχὴν, sed κοινωνίαν τοῦ σώματος Χριστοῦ, ut indicaret ita participari corpus Domini, ut fiant unum participans et res participata, sicut verbum et Dei caro. Ὁ μετέχων partem aliquam sibi vindicat, ὁ κοινωνῶν totius particeps est.

fest, in making the symbols to be the instruments of conveying himself to the spirit of the receiver: he nourishes the soul with bread, and feeds the body with a sacrament; he makes the body spiritual, by his graces there ministered, and makes the spirit to be united to his body, by a participation of the Divine nature. In the sacrament, that body which is reigning in heaven, is exposed upon the table of blessing; and his body, which was broken for us, is now broken again, and yet remains impassible. Every consecrated portion of bread and wine does exhibit Christ entirely to the faithful receiver; and yet Christ remains one, while he is wholly ministered in ten thousand portions. So long as we call these mysterious, and make them intricate, to exercise our faith, and to represent the wonder of the mystery, and to increase our charity; our being inquisitive into the abyss can have no evil purposes. God hath instituted the rite in visible symbols, to make the secret grace as presential and discernible as it might; that, by an instrument of sense, our spirits might be accommodated, as with an exterior object, to produce an internal act. But it is the prodigy of a miraculous power, by instruments so easy, to produce effects so glorious. This, then, is the object of wonder and adoration.

5. Secondly: And this effect of power does also remark the Divine wisdom, who hath ordained such symbols; which not only, like spittle and clay toward the curing blind eyes, proclaim an almighty power, but they are apposite and proper to signify a duty, and become to us like the word of life; and from bread they turn into a homily. For, therefore, our wisest Master hath appointed bread and wine, that we may be corporally united to him; that as the symbols, becoming nutriment, are turned into the substance of our bodies; so Christ, being the food of our souls, should assimilate us, making us partakers of the Divine nature. It also tells us, that from hence we derive life and holy motion; "for in him we live, and move, and have our being." He is the staff of our life, and the light of our eyes, and the strength of our spirit; he is the viand for our journey, and the antepast of heaven. And because this holy mystery was intended to be a sacrament of union, that lesson is morally represented in the symbols; that as the salutary juice is expressed from many clusters running into one chalice, and the bread is a

mass made of many grains of wheat; so we also, (as the apostle infers from hence, himself observing the analogy,) should "be one bread and one body, because we partake of that one bread." And it were to be wished, that from hence, also, all Christians would understand a signification of another duty, and that they would often communicate; as remembering that the soul may need a frequent ministration, as well as the body its daily proportion. This consideration of the Divine wisdom is apt to produce reverence, humility, and submission of our understanding, to the immensity of God's unsearchable abysses.

6. Thirdly: But the story of the love of our dearest Lord is written in largest characters; who not only was at that instant busy in doing man the greatest good, even then when man was contriving his death and his dishonour; but contrived to represent his bitter passion to us, without any circumstances of horror, in symbols of pleasure and delight; that "we may taste and see how gracious our Lord is," who would not transmit the record of his passion to us in any thing that might trouble us. No love can be greater than that, which is so beatifical as to bestow the greatest good; and no love can be better expressed than that which, although it is productive of the greatest blessings, yet is curious also to observe the smallest circumstances. And not only both these, but many other circumstances and arguments of love, concur in the holy sacrament. 1. It is a tenderness of affection, that ministers wholesome physic, with arts and instruments of pleasure: and such was the charity of our Lord, who brings health to us in a golden chalice; life, not in the bitter drugs of Egypt, but in spirits and quintessences; giving us apples of paradise, at the same time yielding food, and health, and pleasure. 2. Love desires to do all good to its beloved object; and that is the greatest love, which gives us the greatest blessings: and the sacrament, therefore, is the argument of his greatest love; for in it we receive the honey, and the honey-comb; the paschal lamb, with his bitter herbs; Christ with all his griefs, and his passion, with all the salutary effects of it. 3. Love desires to be remembered, and to have his object in perpetual representment: and this sacrament Christ designed to that purpose, that he, who is not present to our eyes, might always be present to our spirits.

4. Love demands love again; and to desire to be beloved, is, of itself, a great argument of love: and as God cannot give us a greater blessing than his love, which is himself, with an excellency of relation to us superadded; so what greater demonstration of it can he make to us, than to desire us to love him, with as much earnestness and vehemency of desire, as if we were that to him which he is essentially to us, the author of our being and our blessing? 5. And yet, to consummate this love, and represent it to be the greatest and most excellent, the holy Jesus hath in this sacrament designed, that we should be united in our spirits with him, incorporated to his body, partake of his Divine nature, and communicate in all his graces; and love hath no expression beyond this, that it desires to be united unto its object. So that what Moses said to the men of Israel, "What nation is so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is, in all things for which we call upon him?" we can enlarge in the meditation of this holy sacrament: for now the Lord our God calls upon us, not only to be nigh unto him, but to be all one with him; not only as he was, in the incarnation, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, but also to communicate, in spirit, in grace, in nature, in Divinity itself.

7. Upon the strength of the premises, we may sooner take an estimate of the graces which are conveyed to us, in the reception and celebration of this holy sacrament and sacrifice. For, as it is a commemoration and representment of Christ's death, so it is a commemorative sacrifice: as we receive the symbols and the mystery, so it is a sacrament. In both capacities, the benefit is next to infinite. First: for whatsoever Christ did at the institution, the same he commanded the church to do, in remembrance and repeated rites; and himself also does the same thing in heaven for us, making perpetual intercession for his church, the body of his redeemed ones, by representing to his Father his death and sacrifice. There he sits, a high priest continually, and offers still the same one perfect sacrifice; that is, still represents it as having been once finished and consummate, in order to perpetual and never-failing events. And this, also, his ministers do on earth; they offer up the same sacrifice to God, the sacrifice of the cross, by prayers, and a commemorating rite and representment, according to his holy institution. And as

all the effects of grace and the titles of glory were purchased for us on the cross, and the actual mysteries of redemption perfected on earth, but are applied to us, and made effectual to single persons and communities of men, by Christ's intercession in heaven; so also they are promoted by acts of duty and religion here on earth, that we may be "workers together with God," (as St. Paul expresses it[e];) and, in virtue of the eternal and all-sufficient sacrifice, may offer up our prayers and our duty; and by representing that sacrifice, may send up, together with our prayers, an instrument of their graciousness and acceptation. The funerals of a deceased friend are not only performed at his first interring, but in the monthly minds and anniversary commemorations; and our grief returns upon the sight of a picture, or upon any instance which our dead friend desired us to preserve as his memorial: we "celebrate and exhibit the Lord's death," in sacrament and symbol; and this is that great express, which, when the church offers to God the Father, it obtains all those blessings which that sacrifice purchased. Themistocles snatched up the son of king Admetus, and held him between himself and death, to mitigate the rage of the king, and prevailed accordingly. Our very holding up the Son of God, and representing him to his Father, is the doing an act of mediation and advantage to ourselves, in the virtue and efficacy of the Mediator. As Christ is a priest in heaven for ever, and yet does not sacrifice himself afresh, nor yet without a sacrifice could he be a priest; but, by a daily ministration and intercession, represents his sacrifice to God, and offers himself as sacrificed: so he does upon earth, by the ministry of his servants; he is offered to God, that is, he is, by prayers and the sacrament, represented or "offered up to God, as sacrificed;" which, in effect, is a celebration of his death, and the applying it to the present and future necessities of the church, as we are capable, by a ministry like to his in heaven. It follows, then, that the celebration of this sacrifice be, in its proportion[f], an instrument of applying the proper sacrifice to all the purposes which it first designed. It is

[e] 2 Cor. vi. 1.

[f] Iste calix, benedictione solenni sacratus, ad totius hominis vitam salutemque proficit; simul medicamentum et holocaustum, ad sanandas infirmitates et purgandas iniquitates, exsistens. — *S. Cyp. de Cœna Dom.*

ministerially, and by application, an instrument propitiatory; it is eucharistical, it is an homage, and an act of adoration; and it is impetratory, and obtains for us, and for the whole church, all the benefits of the sacrifice, which is now celebrated and applied; that is, as this rite is the remembrance and ministerial celebration of Christ's sacrifice, so it is destined to do honour to God, to express the homage and duty of his servants, to acknowledge his supreme dominion, to give him thanks and worship, to beg pardon, blessings, and supply of all our needs. And its profit is enlarged, not only to the persons celebrating, but to all to whom they design it, according to the nature of sacrifices and prayers, and all such solemn actions of religion.

8. Secondly: If we consider this, not as the act and ministry of ecclesiastical persons, but as the duty of the whole church communicating; that is, as it is a sacrament, so it is like the springs of Eden, from whence issue many rivers, or the trees of celestial Jerusalem, bearing various kinds of fruit. For whatsoever was offered in the sacrifice, is given in the sacrament; and whatsoever the testament bequeaths, the holy mysteries dispense. 1. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him[g];" Christ in his temple and his resting-place, and the worthy communicant is in sanctuary and a place of protection: and every holy soul having feasted at his table, may say, as St. Paul, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me[h]." So that, "to live is Christ[i]:" "Christ is our life[k]," and he dwells in the body and the spirit of every one that eats Christ's flesh and drinks his blood. Happy is that man that sits at the table of angels, that puts his hand into the dish with the King of all the creatures, and feeds upon the eternal Son of God; joining things below with things above, heaven with earth, life with death; "that mortality might be swallowed up of life," and sin be destroyed by the inhabitation of its greatest conqueror. And now I need not enumerate any particulars; since the Spirit of God hath ascertained us, that Christ enters into our hearts, and takes possession, and abides there; that we are made temples and celestial mansions; that we are all one with our Judge, and with our Redeemer; that our Creator is

[g] John, vi. 56. [h] Gal. ii. 20. [i] Phil. i. 21. [k] Col. iii. 4.

bound unto his creature with bonds of charity, which nothing can dissolve, unless our own hands break them; that man is united with God, and our weakness is fortified by his strength, and our miseries wrapped up in the golden leaves of glory. 2. Hence it follows, that the sacrament is an instrument of reconciling us to God, and taking off the remanent guilt, and stain, and obligations of our sins. "This is the blood that was shed for you, for the remission of sins. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." And such are all they who worthily eat the flesh of Christ; by receiving him, they more and more receive remission of sins, redemption, sanctification, wisdom, and certain hopes of glory. For as the soul, touching and united to the flesh of Adam, contracts the stain of original misery and imperfection; so much the rather shall the soul, united to the flesh of Christ, receive pardon and purity, and all those blessed emanations, from our union with the second Adam. But this is not to be understood, as if the first beginnings of our pardon were in the holy communion; for then a man might come, with his impurities along with him, and lay them on the holy table, to stain and pollute so bright a presence. No; first, repentance must "prepare the ways of the Lord:" and, in this holy rite, those words of our Lord are verified, "He that is justified, let him be justified still;" that is, here we may receive the increase of grace; and as it grows, so sin dies, and we are reconciled by nearer unions and approximations to God.

9. Thirdly: The holy sacrament is the pledge of glory and the earnest of immortality[1]; for when we have received him who hath "overcome death, and henceforth dies no more," he becomes to us like the tree of life in paradise; and the consecrated symbols are like the seeds of an eternal duration, springing up in us to eternal life, nourishing our spirits with grace, which is but the prologue and the infancy of glory, and differs from it only as a child from a man. But God first raised up his Son to life, and, by giving him to us, hath also consigned us to the same state; for "our life is hid

[1] Ἀθανασίας φάρμακον. — *S. Ignat. Ep. ad Ephes.*

Spes resurrectionis. — *Optat. Milevit.* lib. vi. *contr. Parmen.*

Qui manducat carnem meam, habet vitam æternam, et resuscitabo eum in novissimo die. — *S. John*, vi. 54.

with Christ, in God[m]." "When we lay down, and cast aside the impurer robes of flesh, they are then but preparing for glory; and if, by the only touch of Christ, bodies were redintegrate and restored to natural perfections; how shall not we live for ever, who eat his flesh and drink his blood?" It is the discourse of St. Cyril[n]. Whatsoever the Spirit can convey to the body of the church, we may expect from this sacrament; for as the Spirit is the instrument of life and action, so the blood of Christ is the conveyance of his Spirit. And let all the mysterious places of holy Scripture, concerning the effects of Christ communicated in the blessed sacrament, be drawn together in one scheme, we cannot but observe, that, although they are so expressed as that their meaning may seem intricate and involved, yet they cannot be drawn to any meaning at all, but it is as glorious in its sense, as it is mysterious in the expression: and the more intricate they are, the greater is their purpose; no words being apt and proportionate to signify this spiritual secret, and excellent effects of the Spirit. A veil is drawn before all these testimonies, because the people were not able to behold the glory which they cover with their curtain; and "Christ dwelling in us," and "giving us his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink;" and "the hiding of our life with God," and "the communication of the body of Christ," and "Christ being our life," are such secret glories, that, as the fruition of them is the portion of the other world, so also is the full perception and understanding of them: for, therefore, God appears to us in a cloud, and his glories in a veil; that we, understanding more of it by its concealment than we can by its open face, which is too bright for our weak eyes, may, with more piety, also entertain the greatness, by these indefinite and mysterious significations, than we can by plain and direct intuitions; which, like the sun in a direct ray, enlightens the object, but confounds the organ.

10. I should but in other words describe the same glories, if I should add, That this holy sacrament does enlighten the

[m] Colos. iii. 3.

[n] S. Cyril. Alex. lib. iv. in Joh. c. 14.

Sic et corpora nostra percipientia Eucharistiam jam non sunt corruptibilia, spem resurrectionis habentia. — *Irenæ.* lib. iv. c. 34.

spirit of man, and clarify it with spiritual discernings; and as he was to the two disciples at Emmaus, so also to other faithful people, "Christ is known in the breaking of bread;" that it is a great defence against the hostilities of our ghostly enemies[o], this holy bread being, like the cake in Gideon's camp, overturning the tents of Midian; that it is the relief of our sorrows, the antidote and preservative of souls, the viand of our journey, the guard and passport of our death, the wine of angels; that it is more healthful than rhubarb, more pleasant than cassia; that the betel and lareca of the Indians, the moly[p] or nepenthe of Pliny, the lirinon of the Persians, the balsam of Judæa, the manna of Israel, the honey of Jonathan, are but weak expressions, to tell us that this is excellent above art and nature, and that nothing is good enough in philosophy to become its emblem. All these must needs fall very short of those plain words of Christ, "This is my body." The other may become the ecstasies of piety, the transportation of joy and wonder; and are like the discourse of St. Peter upon Mount Tabor, he was resolved to say some great thing, but he knew not what: but when we remember, that the body of our Lord and his blood is communicated to us in the bread and the chalice of blessing, we must sit down and rest ourselves, for this is "the mountain of the Lord," and we can go no farther.

11. In the next place it will concern our inquiry, to consider how we are to prepare ourselves: for at the gate of life a man may meet with death: and, although this holy sacrament be like manna, in which the obedient find the relishes of obedience; the chaste, of purity; the meek persons, of content and humility; yet vicious and corrupted palates find also the gust of death and coloquintida. The Sybarites invited their women to their solemn sacrifices, a full year before the solemnity; that they might, by previous dispositions and a long foresight, attend, with gravity and fairer order, the celebration of the rites[q]. And it was a reasonable

[o] Tanquam leones ignem spirantes recedamus ex illa mensa, dæmonibus facti terribiles. — *S. Chrys.*

Poculum quo inebriatur affectus fidelium. — *S. Ambros. Ser.* xv. *in Psal.* 118.

[p] Μῶλυ δέ μιν καλέουσι θεοί· χαλεπὸν δὲ τ' ὀρύσσειν
Ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι· θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα δύνανται. — *Homer.*

[q] Plutarch. Sympos.

answer of Pericles, to one that asked him, why he, being a philosophical and severe person, came to a wedding, trimmed and adorned like a paranymph: "I come adorned, to an adorned person;" trimmed, to a bridegroom. And we, also, if we come to the marriage of the Son with the soul, (which marriage is celebrated in this sacred mystery,) and have not on a wedding-garment, shall be cast into outer darkness, the portion of undressed and unprepared souls.

12. For from this sacrament are excluded all unbaptized persons, and such who lie in a known sin, of which they have not purged themselves by the apt and proper instruments of repentance. For if the paschal lamb was not to be eaten but by persons pure and clean, according to the sanctifications of the law; the Son of God can less endure the impurities of the Spirit, than God could suffer the uncleannesses of the law. St. Paul hath given us instruction in this: "First, let a man examine himself, and so let him eat: for he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body[r]." That is, although, in the church of Corinth, by reason of the present schism, the public discipline of the church was neglected, and every man permitted to himself; yet, even then, no man was disobliged from his duty of private repentance, and holy preparations, to the perception of so great a mystery; that "the Lord's body" may be discerned from common nutriment. Now, nothing can so unhallow and desecrate the rite, as the remanent affection to a sin, or a crime unrepented of. And self-examination is prescribed, not for itself, but in order to abolition of sin and death: for itself is a relative term and an imperfect duty, whose very nature is in order to something beyond it. And this was, in the primitive church, understood to so much severity, that if a man had relapsed, after one public repentance, into a foul crime, he was never again readmitted to the holy communion; and the fathers of the council of Eliberis call it, a mocking and jesting at the communion of our Lord, to give it once again, after a repentance and a relapse, and a second or third postulation. And, indeed, we use to make a sport of the greatest instruments of religion, when we come to them after an habitual vice, whose

[r] 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29. [s] Concil. Eliber. c. 3.

face we have, it may be, wetted with a tear, and breathed upon it with a sigh, and abstained from the worst of crimes for two or three days, and come to the sacrament to be purged, and to take our rise by going a little back from our sin, that afterwards we may leap into it with more violence, and enter into its utmost angle: This is dishonouring the body of our Lord, and deceiving ourselves. Christ and Belial cannot cohabit; unless we have left all our sins, and have no fondness of affection towards them, unless we hate them, (which then we shall best know when we leave them, and with complacency entertain their contraries:) then Christ hath washed our feet, and then he invites us to his holy supper. Hands dipped in blood, or polluted with unlawful gains, or stained with the spots of flesh, are most unfit to handle the holy body of our Lord, and minister nourishment to the soul. Christ loves not to enter into the mouth full of cursings, oaths, blasphemies, revilings, or evil speakings; and a heart full of vain and vicious thoughts, stinks like the lake of Sodom; he finds no rest there, and when he enters, he is vexed with the unclean conversation of the impure inhabitants, and flies from thence with the wings of a dove, that he may retire to pure and whiter habitations. St. Justin Martyr, reckoning the predispositions required of every faithful soul for the entertainment of his Lord, says, that "it is not lawful for any to eat the eucharist, but to him that is washed in the laver of regeneration for the remission of sins, that believes Christ's doctrine to be true, and that lives according to the discipline of the holy Jesus[t]." And, therefore, St. Ambrose refused to minister the holy communion to the emperor Theodosius[u], till, by public repentance, he had reconciled himself to God and the society of faithful people, after the furious and choleric rage and slaughter committed at Thessalonica: and as this act was like to cancellating and

[t] S. Basil. de Bapt. lib. ii. c. 5. Legatur totum caput. S. Ambros. lib. vi. c. 37. in Luc. 9.

Ubique mysterii ordo servatur, ut priùs per remissionem peccatorum vulneribus medicina tribuatur, postea alimonia mensæ cœlestis exuberet.—*Paulin. in Vita S. Ambros.*

[u] Si dux quispiam, si consul ipse, si qui diademate ornatur indignè adeat, cohibe et coerce. Quòd si ipse pellere non audes, mihi dicas, non permittam ista fieri; animam potiùs tradam meam, quàm Dominicum alicui corpus indigné.—*S. Chrysost. hom.* 83. *in Matth.*

a circumvallation of the holy mysteries, and in that sense, and so far, was a proper duty for a prelate, to whose dispensation the rites are committed; so it was an act of duty to the emperor, of paternal and tender care, not of proper authority or jurisdiction, which he could not have over his prince, but yet had a care and the supravision of a teacher over him; whose soul St. Ambrose had betrayed, unless he had represented his indisposition to communicate in expressions of magisterial or doctoral authority and truth. For this holy sacrament is a nourishment of spiritual life, and, therefore, cannot with effect be ministered to them who are in the state of spiritual death; it is giving a cordial to a dead man; and, although the outward rite be ministered, yet the grace of the sacrament is not communicated; and, therefore, it were well that they also abstained from the rite itself. For a fly can boast of as much privilege as a wicked person can receive from this holy feast[x], and oftentimes pays his life for his access to forbidden delicacies, as certainly as they.

13. It is more generally thought by the doctors of the church, that our blessed Lord administered the sacrament to Judas, although he knew he sold him to the Jews. Some others deny it, and suppose Judas departed presently after the sop given him, before he communicated[y]. However it was, Christ, who was Lord of the sacraments, might dispense it as he pleased: but we must minister and receive it according to the rules he hath since described: but it becomes a precedent to the church in all succeeding ages, although it might also have in it something extraordinary, and apter to the first institution; for, because the fact of Judas was secret, not yet made notorious, Christ chose rather to admit him into the rites of external communion, than to separate him, with an open shame, for a fault not yet made open. For our blessed Lord did not reveal the man and his crime, till the very time of ministration, if Judas did communicate. But if Judas did not communicate, and that our blessed Lord gave

[x] Exta prægusto Deûm, Moror inter aras, templa perlustro omnia;
In capite regis sedeo cùm visum est mihi,
Et matronarum casta delibo oscula. — *Phædr. Fab.* 80.

[y] Negatur à Clemente Rom. v. Const. c. 16. ab Hilario, c. 30. in Matth. Innocentio, lib. iii. de Myster. c. 13. à Ruperto, Hildebrand. Cenoman. et paucis aliis.

him the sop at the paschal supper, or at the interval between it and the institution of his own, it is certain that Judas went out as soon as he was discovered, and left this part of discipline upon record, That when a crime is made public and notorious, the governors of the church, according to their power, are to deny to give the blessed sacrament, till by repentance such persons be restored[z]. In private sins, or sins not known by solemnities of law, or evidence of fact, good and bad are entertained in public communion; and it is not to be accounted a crime in them that minister it, because they cannot avoid it, or have not competent authority to separate persons, whom the public act of the church hath not separated: but if once a public separation be made, or that the fact is notorious, and the sentence of law is in such cases already declared; they that come, and he that rejects them not, both pollute the blood of the everlasting covenant. And here it is applicable, what God spake by the prophet: "If thou wilt separate the precious thing from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth[a]."

But this is wholly a matter of discipline, arbitrary, and in the power of the church; nothing in it of Divine commandment, but what belongs to the communicants themselves: for St. Paul reproves them that receive disorderly, but gives no orders to the Corinthian presbyters to reject any that present themselves. Neither did our blessed Lord leave any commandment concerning it, nor hath the holy Scripture given rules or measures, concerning its actual reduction to practice; neither who are to be separated, nor for what offences, nor by what authority, nor who is to be the judge. And, indeed, it is a judgment that can only belong to God, who knows the secrets of hearts, the degrees of every sin, the beginnings and portions of repentance, the sincerity of purposes, by what thoughts and designs men begin to be accepted, who are hypocrites, and who are true men. But when many and common men come to judge, they are angry upon trifling mistakes and weak disputes; they call that sin, that angers their party, or grieves their interest; they turn

[z] Nec a communione prohibere quenquam possumus, nisi aut sponte confessum, aut in aliquo sive seculari sive Ecclesiastico Judicio nominatum atque convictum. — *S. Aug.* lib. 1. *Homil.* 50. *S. Thom.* 3. *p. q.* 81. *a.* 2.

[a] Jer. xv. 19.

charity into pride, and admonition into tyranny; they set up a tribunal, that themselves may sit higher, not that their brethren may walk more securely: and then concerning sins, in most cases, they are most incompetent judges; they do not know all their kinds; they miscall many; they are ignorant of the ingredient and constituent parts and circumstances; they themselves make false measures, and give out according to them, when they please; and when they list not, they can change the balance. When the matter is public, evident, and notorious, the man is to be admonished of his danger by the minister, but not, by him, to be forced from it: for the power of the minister of holy things is but the power of a preacher and a counsellor, of a physician and a guide; it hath in it no coercion or violence, but what is indulged to it by human laws, and by consent, which may vary as its principle.

Add to this, that the grace of God can begin the work of repentance in an instant, and in what period or degree of repentance the holy communion is to be administered, no law of God declares; which, therefore, plainly allows it to every period, and leaves no difference, except where the discipline of the church, and the authority of the supreme power, doth intervene. For since we do not find in Scripture that the apostles did drive from the communion of holy things, even those, whom they delivered over to Satan or other censures, we are left to consider that, in the nature of the thing, those who are in the state of weakness and infirmity, have more need of the solemn prayers of the church, and, therefore, by presenting themselves to the holy sacrament, approach towards that ministry, which is the most effectual cure; especially since the very presenting themselves is an act of religion, and, therefore, supposes an act of repentance and faith, and other little introductions to its fair reception; and if they may be prayed for, and prayed with, why they may not also be communicated, which is the solemnity of the greatest prayer, is not yet clearly revealed.

This discourse relates only to private ministry: for when I affirm, that there is no command from Christ, to all his ministers, to refuse whom they are pleased to call "scandalous" or "sinners," I intend to defend good people from the tyranny and arbitrary power of those great companies of

ministers, who, in so many hundred places, would have a judicature supreme in spirituals, which would be more intolerable, than if they had, in one province, twenty thousand judges of life and death. But when the power of separation and interdiction is only in some more eminent and authorized persons, who take public cognizance of causes by solemnities of law, and exercise their power but in some rare instances, and then also for the public interest, in which, although they may be deceived, yet they are the most competent and likely judges, much of the inconvenience, which might otherwise follow, is avoided: and then it only remains, that they consider, in what cases it can be a competent and a proper infliction upon sinners, to take from them that, which is the means and ministry of grace and recovery; whether they have any warrant from Christ, or precedent in the apostles' practice, and how far. As for the forms and usages of the primitive church, they were hugely different, sometimes for one cause, sometimes for another. Sometimes whole churches have been excommunicated; sometimes the criminal, and all his household for his offence, as it happened in the excommunication of Andronicus and Thoas, in Synesius, in the year 411[b]: sometimes they were absolved and restored by lay-confessors, sometimes by emperors, as it happened to Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Theognis of Nice, who were absolved, by Constantine, from the sentence of excommunication, inflicted by the Nicene fathers; and a monk did excommunicate Theodosius the younger[c]. So that, in this, there can be no certainty to make a measure and a rule. The surest way, most agreeable to the precedents of Scripture, and the analogy of the Gospel, is that, "by the word of their proper ministry," all sinners should be separate from the holy communion, that is, threatened, by the words of God, with damnation, and fearful temporal dangers, if themselves, knowing an unrepented sin, and a remanent affection to sin, to be within them, shall dare to profane that body and blood of our Lord by so impure an address. The evil is to themselves; and if the ministers declare this powerfully, they are acquitted. But concerning other judgments or separa-

[b] Synes. ep. 79.

[c] Theod. Hist. lib. v. 36. Baron. tom. v. A. D. 425. sect. 16.

tions, the supreme power can forbid all assembling, and, therefore, can permit them to all, and, therefore, can deny them, or grant them, to single persons; and, therefore, when he, by laws, makes separations in order to public benefit, they are to be obeyed: but it is not to be endured, that single presbyters should, upon vain pretences, erect so high a tribunal and tyranny over consciences.

14. The duty of preparation, that I here discourse of, is such a preparation as is a disposition to life; it is not a matter of convenience or advantage, to repent of our sins before the communion; but it is of absolute necessity, we perish if we neglect it; for we "eat damnation," and Satan enters into us, not Christ. And this preparation is not the act of a day or a week; but it is a new state of life: no man, that is an habitual sinner, must come to this feast, till he hath wholly changed his course of life. And then, according as the actions of infirmity have made less or greater invasion upon his peace and health, so are the acts of repentance to be proportioned; in which the greatness of the prevarications, their neighbourhood to death, or their frequent repetition, and the conduct of a spiritual man, are to give us counsel and determination. When a ravening and hungry wolf is destitute of prey, he eats the turf, and loads his stomach with the glebe he treads on; but as soon as he finds better food, he vomits up his first load. Our secular and sensual affections are loads of earth upon the conscience; and when we approach the table of the Lord, to eat the bread of the elect, and to drink the wine of angels, we must reject such impure adhesions, that holy persons, being nourished with holy symbols, may be sanctified, and receive the eternal reward of holiness.

15. But as none must come hither but they, that are in the state of grace, or charity, and the love of God and their neighbours, and that the abolition of the state of sin is the necessary preparation, and is the action of years, and was not accepted as sufficient, till the expiration of divers years, by the primitive discipline, and, in some cases, not till the approach of death: so there is another preparation, which is of less necessity, which supposes the state of grace, and that oil is burning in our lamps; but yet it is a preparation of ornament, a trimming up the soul, a dressing the spirit with

degrees and instances of piety, and progresses of perfection: and it consists in setting apart some portion of our time, before the communion, that it be spent in prayer, in meditations, in renewing the vows of holy obedience, in examining our consciences, in mortifying our lesser irregularities, in devotions and actions of precise religion, in acts of faith, of hope, of charity, of zeal and holy desires, in acts of eucharist or thanksgiving, of joy at the approach of so blessed an opportunity, and all the acts of virtue whatsoever, which have indefinite relation to this and to other mysteries; but yet are specially to be exercised upon this occasion, because this is the most perfect of external rites, and the most mysterious instrument of sanctification and perfection. There is no time or degree to be determined in this preparation; but they, "to whom much is forgiven, will love much;" and they,—who understand the excellence and holiness of the mystery, the glory of the guest that comes to inhabit, and the indecency of the closet of their hearts, by reason of the adherences of impurity, the infinite benefit then designed, and the increase of degrees by the excellence of these previous acts of holiness,—will not be too inquisitive into the necessity of circumstances and measures, but do it heartily, and devoutly, and reverently, and, as much as they can, ever esteeming it necessary, that the actions of so great solemnity should, by some actions of piety, attending like handmaids, be distinguished from common employments, and remarked for the principal and most solemn of religious actions. The primitive church gave the holy sacrament to infants immediately after baptism [d], and, by that act transmitted this proposition, That nothing was of absolute necessity but innocency and purity from sin, and a being in the state of grace [e]; other actions of religion are excellent addition to the dignity of the person and honour of the mystery; but they were such, of which infants were not capable. The sum is this: After the greatest consociation of religious duties for preparation, no man can be sufficiently

[d] Clem. Rom. lib. viii. Constit. c. 20. Concil. Tolet. i. c. 11. S. Aug. ep. 23. ad Bonif. et ep. 107. et lib. iv. de Trin. c. 10.

[e] Habentem adhuc voluntatem peccandi gravari magis dico eucharistiæ perceptione quàm purificari: sed hoc de iis dico quos capitalia et mortalia non gravant. — *Gennad.* lib. iii. de Eccl. Dogmat. c. 53.

worthy to communicate: let us take care that we be not unworthy, by bringing a guilt with us, or the remanent affection to a sin.

Est gloriosus sanè convictus Dei;
Sed illi qui invitatur, non qui invisus est.

16. When the happy hour is come, in which the Lord vouchsafes to enter into us, and dwell with us, and be united with his servants, we must then do the same acts over again with greater earnestness and intension; confess the glories of God and thy own unworthiness, praise his mercy with ecstasy of thanksgiving and joy, make oblation of thyself, of all thy faculties and capacities, pray, and read, and meditate, and worship: and that thou mayest more opportunely do all this, rise early to meet the bridegroom, pray for special assistance, enter into the assembly of faithful people cheerfully, attend there diligently, demean thyself reverently, and, before any other meat or drink, receive the body of thy Saviour with pure hands, with holy intention, with a heart full of joy, and faith, and hope, and wonder, and eucharist. These things I, therefore, set down irregularly and without method, because, in these actions, no rule can be given to all persons; and only such a love, and such a religion, in general, is to be recommended, which will overrun the banks, and not easily stand confined within the margent of rules and artificial prescriptions. Love and religion are boundless, and all acts of grace, relating to the present mystery, are fit and proportioned entertainments of our Lord. This only remember, that we are, by the mystery of "one bread," confederated into one body, and the communion of saints, and that the sacrifice, which we then commemorate, was designed, by our Lord, for the benefit of all his church: let us be sure to draw all faithful people into the society of the present blessing, joining, with the holy man that ministers, in prayers and offerings of that mystery, for the benefit of all sorts of men, of Christ's catholic church. And it were also an excellent act of Christian communion, and agreeable to the practice of the church in all ages, to make an oblation to God for the poor; that, as we are fed by Christ's body, so we also should feed Christ's body, making such returns as we can, a grain of frankincense in exchange for a province, an

act of duty and Christian charity as eucharistical for the present grace, that all the body may rejoice and glory in the salvation of the Lord.

17. After thou hast received that pledge of immortality and antepast of glory, even the Lord's body in a mystery, leave not thy Saviour there alone, but attend him with holy thoughts and colloquies of prayer and eucharist. It was sometime counted infamous for a woman to entertain a second love, till the body of her dead husband was dissolved into ashes, and disappeared in the form of a body. And it were well, that so long as the consecrated symbols remain within us, according to common estimate, we should keep the flame bright, and the perfume of an actual devotion burning, that our communion be not a transient act, but a permanent and lasting intercourse with our Lord[f]. But in this every man best knows his own opportunities and necessities of diversion. I only commend earnestly to practice, that every receiver should make a recollection of himself, and the actions of the day, that he improve it to the best advantage, that he show unto our Lord all the defects of his house, all his poverty and weaknesses: and this let every man do, by such actions and devotions which he can best attend, and himself, by the advice of a spiritual man, finds of best advantage. I would not make the practice of religion, especially in such irregular instances, to be an art, or a burden, or a snare, to scrupulous persons: what St. Paul said in the case of charity I say also in this; "He that sows plentifully, shall reap plentifully, and he that sows sparingly, shall gather" at the same rate; "let every man do, as himself purposeth in his heart." Only it were well in this sacrament of love, we had some correspondency, and proportionable returns of charity and religious affections.

18. Some religious persons have moved a question, Whether it were better to communicate often or seldom? some thinking it more reverence to those holy mysteries to come but seldom; while others say, it is greater religion or charity to come frequently. But I suppose this question does not differ much from a dispute, Whether is better to

[f] Malè olim actum est, cùm sacrificia compotationibus finierant.

Ἀπὸ τούτου γέ φασι τὸ μεθύειν ὀνομάσθαι, ὅτι μετὰ τὸ θύειν ἔθος ἦ τοῖς πρεσβύταις οἰνοῦσθαι. — *Philo.*

pray often, or to pray seldom? For whatsoever is commonly pretended against a frequent communion, may, in its proportion, object against a solemn prayer; remanent affection to a sin, enmity with neighbours, secular avocations to the height of care and trouble: for these either are great indecencies, in order to a holy prayer; or else, are direct irregularities, and unhallow the prayer. And the celebration of the holy sacrament is, in itself and its own formality, a sacred, solemn, and ritual prayer, in which we invocate God by the merits of Christ, expressing that adjuration, not only in words, but in actual representment and commemoration of his passion. And if the necessities of the church were well considered,[f] we should find that a daily sacrifice of prayer, and a daily prayer of sacrifice, were no more but what her condition requires: and I would to God the governors of churches would take care, that the necessities of kings and kingdoms, of churches and states, were represented to God by the most solemn and efficacious intercessions; and Christ hath taught us none greater than the praying in the virtue and celebration of his sacrifice. And this is the counsel, that the church received from Ignatius: "Hasten frequently to approach the eucharist, the glory of God. For when this is daily celebrated, we break the powers of Satan, who turns all his actions into hostilities and darts of fire." But this concerns the ministers of religion, who, living in communities and colleges, must make religion the business of their lives, and support kingdoms, and serve the interest of kings, by the prayer of a daily sacrifice. And yet, in this ministry, the clergy may serve their own necessary affairs, if the ministration be divided into courses, as it was, by the economy and wisdom of Solomon, for the temple.

19. But concerning the communion of secular and lay persons, the consideration is something different. St. Austin gave this answer to it: "To receive the sacrament every day, I neither praise nor reprove; at least, let them receive it every Lord's day[g]." And this he spake to husbandmen and merchants. At the first commencement of Christianity, while the fervors apostolical, and the calentures of infant Christendom did last, the whole assembly of faithful people

[f] Gennadius, c. 54. de Eccles. Dogmat.

communicated every day; and this lasted in Rome and Spain until the time of St. Jerome[h]: concerning which diligence he gives the same censure, which I now recited from St. Austin; for it suffered inconvenience by reason of a declining piety, and the intervening of secular interests. But then it came to once a week; and yet that was not everywhere strictly observed[i]. But that it be received once every fortnight, St. Hierome counsels very strongly to Eustochium, a holy virgin: "Let the virgins confess their sins twice every month, or oftener; and, being fortified with the communion of the Lord's body, let them manfully fight against the devil's forces and attempts." A while after, it came to once a month, then once a year, then it fell from that too; till all the Christians in the west were commanded to communicate every Easter by the decree of a great council[k] above five hundred years since. But the church of England, finding that too little, hath commanded all her children to receive thrice every year at least, intending that they should come oftener; but of this she demands an account. For it hath fared with this sacrament as with other actions of religion, which have descended from flames to still fires, from fires to sparks, from sparks to embers, from embers to smoke, from smoke to nothing. And although the public declension of piety is such, that, in this present conjuncture of things, it is impossible men should be reduced to a daily communion; yet that they are to communicate frequently is so a duty, that, as no excuse but impossibility can make the omission innocent, so the loss and consequent want is infinite and invaluable.

20. For the holy communion being a remembrance and sacramental repetition of Christ's passion, and the application of his sacrifice to us and the whole Catholic church; as they who seldom communicate, delight not to remember the passion of our Lord, and sin against his very purpose, and one of the designs of institution; so he cares not to receive the benefits of the sacrifice, whoso neglects their application, and reducing them to actual profit and reception. "Whence

[h] Epist. 80. ad Lucinum.

[i] Itaque sicut nobis licet vel jejunare semper, vel semper orare, et diem Dominicum, accepto corpore Domini, indesinenter celebrare gaudentibus, &c.— *Idem.*

[k] Concil. Lat.

came the sanctimony of the primitive Christians? whence came their strict observation of the Divine commandments? whence was it, that they persevered in holy actions with hope and an unweary diligence? from whence did their despising worldly things come, and living with common possession, and the distributions of an universal charity? Whence came these, and many other excellencies, but from a constant prayer, and a daily eucharist? They who every day represented the death of Christ, every day were ready to die for Christ." It was the discourse of an ancient and excellent person. And if we consider, this sacrament is intended to unite the spirits and affections of the world, and that it is diffusive and powerful to this purpose, (" for we are one body," saith St. Paul, " because we partake of one bread;") possibly we may have reason to say, that the wars of kingdoms, the animosity of families, the infinite multitude of lawsuits, the personal hatreds, and the universal want of charity, which hath made the world miserable and wicked, may, in a great degree, be attributed to the neglect of this great symbol and instrument of charity. The chalice of the sacrament is called by St. Paul, " the cup of blessing;" and if children need every day to beg blessings of their parents, if we also thirst not after this cup of blessing, blessing may be far from us. It is called " the communication of the blood of Christ;" and it is not imaginable, that man should love heaven, or felicity, or his Lord, that desires not perpetually to bathe in that salutary stream, the blood of the holy Jesus, the immaculate Lamb of God.

21. But I find, that the religious fears of men are pretended a colour to excuse this irreligion. Men are wicked, and not prepared, and busy, and full of cares and affairs of the world, and cannot come with due preparation; and therefore better not come at all: nay, men are not ashamed to say, they are at enmity with certain persons, and therefore cannot come. Concerning those persons who are unprepared, because they are in a state of sin or uncharitableness, it is true, they must not come; but this is so far from excusing their not coming, that they increase their sin, and secure misery to themselves, because they do not " lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset them," that they may come to the marriage-supper. It is as if we

should excuse ourselves from the duties of charity, by saying we are uncharitable; from giving alms, by saying we are covetous; from chastity, by saying we are lascivious. To such men it is just that they graze with the goats, because they refuse to wash their hands, that they may come to the supper of the Lamb. 2. Concerning those that pretend cares and incumbrances of the world; if their affairs make sin and impure affections to stick upon them, they are in the first consideration: but if their office be necessary, just, or charitable, they imitate Martha, and choose the less perfect part, when they neglect the offices of religion for duties economical. 3. But the other sort have more pretence and fairer virtue in their outside. They suppose, like the Persian princes, the seldomer such mysterious rites are seen, the more reverence we shall have, and they the more majesty: and they are fearful lest the frequent attrectation of them should make us less to value the great earnests of our redemption and immortality. It is a pious consideration, but not becoming them: for it cannot be, that the sacrament be undervalued by frequent reception, without the great unworthiness of the persons, so turning God's grace into lightness and loathing manna: nay, it cannot be without an unworthy communication; for he that receives worthily, increases in the love of God and religion, and the fires of the altar are apt to kindle our sparks into a flame; and when Christ our Lord enters into us, and we grow weary of him, or less fond of his frequent entrance and perpetual cohabitation, it is an infallible sign we have let his enemy in, or are preparing for it. For this is the difference between secular and spiritual objects: Nothing in this world hath any pleasure in it long beyond the hope of it, for the possession and enjoyment is found so empty, that we grow weary of it; but whatsoever is spiritual, and in order to God, is less before we have it, but in the fruition it swells our desires, and enlarges the appetite, and makes us more receptive and forward in the entertainment: and therefore, those acts of religion that set us forward in time, and backward in affection, do declare that we have not well done our duty, but have communicated unworthily. So that the mending of our fault will answer the objection. Communicate with more devotion, and repent with greater contrition, and walk with more caution, and

pray more earnestly, and meditate diligently, and receive with reverence and godly fear; and we shall find our affections increase together with the spiritual emolument; ever remembering that pious and wise advice of St. Ambrose, "Receive, every day, that which may profit thee every day. But he that is not disposed to receive it every day, is not fit to receive it every year[l]."

22. And if, after all diligence, it be still feared that a man is not well prepared, I must say that it is a scruple, that is, a trouble beyond a doubt and without reason, next to superstition and the dreams of religion; and it is nourished, by imagining that no duty is accepted, if it be less than perfection, and that God is busied in heaven, not only to destroy the wicked, and to dash in pieces vessels of dishonour, but to "break a bruised reed" in pieces, and to cast the "smoking flax" into the flames of hell. In opposition to which, we must know, that nothing makes us unprepared but an evil conscience[m], a state of sin, or a deadly act: but the lesser infirmities of our life, against which we daily strive, and for which we never have any kindness or affections, are not spots in these feasts of charity, but instruments of humility, and stronger invitations to come to those rites, which are ordained for corroboratives against infirmities of the soul, and for the growth of the spirit in the strengths of God. For those other acts of preparation, which precede and accompany the duty, the better and more religiously they are done, they are indeed of more advantage, and honorary to the sacrament; yet he that comes in the state of grace, though he takes the opportunity upon a sudden offer, sins not: and in such indefinite duties, whose degrees are not described, it is good counsel to do our best; but it is ill to make them instruments of scruple, as if it were essentially necessary to do that in the greatest height, which is only intended for advantage, and the fairer accommodation of the mystery. But these very acts, if they be esteemed necessary preparations to the sacrament, are the greatest arguments in the world that it is best to communicate often; because the doing of that, which must suppose the exercise of so many

[l] De Sacram. lib. v. c. 4.

[m] Tempestivum accessum sola conscientiæ integritas facit. — *S. Chrys.*

graces, must needs promote the interest of religion, and dispose strongly to habitual graces by our frequent and solemn repetition of the acts. It is necessary that every communicant be first examined concerning the state of his soul, by himself or his superior; and that very scrutiny is in admirable order towards the reformation of such irregularities which time and temptation, negligence and incuriousness, infirmity or malice, have brought into the secret regions of our will and understanding. Now, although this examination be therefore enjoined, that no man should approach to the holy table in the state of ruin and reprobation, and that therefore it is an act, not of direct preparation, but an inquiry whether we be prepared or no; yet this very examination will find so many little irregularities, and so many great imperfections, that it will appear the more necessary, to repair the breaches and lesser ruins by such acts of piety and religion; because every communication is intended to be a nearer approach to God, a farther step in grace, a progress towards glory, and an instrument of perfection; and therefore upon the stock of our spiritual interests, for the purchase of a greater hope, and the advantages of a growing charity, ought to be frequently received. I end with the words of a pious and learned person[n]: "It is a vain fear and an imprudent reverence, that procrastinates and defers going to the Lord that calls them:" they deny to go to the fire, pretending they are cold; and refuse physic, because they need it."

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal Jesus, who gavest thyself a sacrifice for our sins, thy body for our spiritual food, thy blood to nourish our spirits, and to quench the flames of hell and lust, who didst so love us, who were thine enemies, that thou desiredst to reconcile us to thee, and becamest all one with us, that we may live the same life, think the same thoughts, love the same love, and be partakers of thy resurrection and immortality; open every window of my soul, that I may be full of light, and may see the

[n] Joan. Gerson, in Magnificat.

excellency of thy love, the merits of thy sacrifice, the bitterness of thy passion, the glories and virtues of the mysterious sacrament. Lord, let me ever hunger and thirst after this instrument of righteousness; let me have no gust or relish of the unsatisfying delights of things below, but let my soul dwell in thee; let me for ever receive thee spiritually, and very frequently communicate with thee sacramentally, and imitate thy virtues piously and strictly, and dwell in the pleasures of thy house eternally. "Lord, thou hast prepared a table for me, against them that trouble me:" let that holy sacrament of the eucharist be to me a defence and shield, a nourishment and medicine, life and health, a means of sanctification and spiritual growth; that I, receiving the body of my dearest Lord, may be one with his mystical body, and of the same spirit, united with indissoluble bonds of a strong faith, and a holy hope, and a never-failing charity, that from this veil I may pass into the visions of eternal clarity, from eating thy body, to beholding thy face in the glories of thy everlasting kingdom, O blessed and eternal Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Accidents happening on the Vespers of the Passion.

1. When Jesus had supped and sang a hymn, and prayed, and exhorted and comforted his disciples with a farewell-sermon, in which he repeated such of his former precepts, which were now apposite to the present condition, and reinforced them with proper and pertinent arguments, he went over the brook Cedron, and entered into a garden, and into the prologue of his passion; choosing that place for his agony and satisfactory pains, in which the first scene of human misery was represented, and where he might best attend the offices of devotion preparatory to his death. Besides this, he therefore departed from the house, that he might give opportunity to his enemies' surprise, and yet not incommodate the good man by whose hospitality they had eaten the Paschal lamb; so that he went "like a lamb to the

slaughter," to the garden as to a prison[a], as if, by an agreement with his persecutors, he had expected their arrest, and staid there to prevent their farther inquiry[b]. For so great was his desire to pay our ransom, that himself did assist, by a forward patience and active opportunity, towards the persecution: teaching us, that, by an active zeal and a ready spirit, we assist the designs of God's glory, though in our own sufferings and secular infelicities.

2. When he entered the garden, he left his disciples at the entrance of it, calling with him only Peter, James, and John: "he withdrew himself from the rest about a stone's cast, and began to be exceeding heavy." He was not sad till he had called them; for his sorrow began when he pleased: which sorrow he also chose to represent to those three who had seen his transfiguration, the earnest of his future glory, that they might see of how great glory for our sakes he disrobed himself; and that they also might, by the confronting those contradictory accidents, observe, that God uses to dispense his comforts, the irradiations and emissions of his glory, to be preparatives to those sorrows, with which our life must be allayed and seasoned; that none should refuse to partake of the sufferings of Christ, if either they have already felt his comforts, or hope hereafter to wear his crown. And it is not ill observed, that St. Peter, being the chief of the apostles and doctor of the circumcision, St. John, being a virgin, and St. James, the first of the apostles that was martyred, were admitted to Christ's greatest retirements and mysterious secrecies, as being persons of so singular and eminent dispositions, to whom, according to the pious opinion of the church, especial coronets are prepared in heaven, besides the great "crown of righteousness," which in common shall beautify the heads of all the saints; meaning this, that doctors, virgins, and martyrs, shall receive, even for their very state of life and accidental graces, more eminent degrees of accidental glory, like as the sun, reflecting upon a limpid fountain, receives its rays doubled, without any increment of its proper and natural light.

3. "Jesus began to be exceeding sorrowful," to be "sore amazed," and "sad even to death." And because he was

[a] Etenim in horto tanquam in carcere.—*S. Chrys.*

[b] Ut laborem minuat Judæis se quærentibus.—*Theophyl.*

now to suffer the pains of our sins, there began his passion; whence our sins spring. From an evil heart, and a prevaricating spirit, all our sins arise; and in the spirit of Christ began his sorrow, where he truly felt the full value and demerit of sin, which we think not worthy of a tear or a hearty sigh: but he groaned, and fell under the burden. But therefore he took upon him this sadness, that our imperfect sorrow and contrition might be heightened in his example, and accepted in its union and confederacy with his. And Jesus still designed a farther mercy for us; for he sanctified the passion of fear, and hallowed natural sadnesses, that we might not think the infelicities of our nature, and the calamities of our temporal condition, to become criminal, so long as they make us not omit a duty, or dispose us to the election of a crime, or force us to swallow a temptation, nor yet to exceed the value of their impulsive cause. He that grieves for the loss of friends, and yet had rather lose all the friends he hath than lose the love of God, hath the sorrow of our Lord for his precedent. And he that fears death, and trembles at its approximation, and yet had rather die again than sin once, hath not sinned in his fear; Christ hath hallowed it, and the necessitous condition of his nature is his excuse. But it were highly to be wished, that, in the midst of our caresses and levities of society, in our festivities and triumphal merriments, when we laugh at folly and rejoice in sin, we would remember, that for those very merriments our blessed Lord felt a bitter sorrow; and not one vain and sinful laughter, but cost the holy Jesus a sharp pang and throe of passion.

4. Now that the holy Jesus began to taste the bitter cup, he betook him to his great antidote, which himself, the great Physician of our souls, prescribed to all the world to cure their calamities, and to make them pass from miseries into virtue, that so they may arrive at glory; he prays to his heavenly Father, he kneels down, and not only so, but "falls flat upon the earth," and would, in humility and fervent adoration, have descended low as the centre; he prays with an intension great as his sorrow, and yet with a dereliction so great, and a conformity to the Divine will so ready, as if it had been the most indifferent thing in the world for him to be delivered to death, or from it: for, though his nature did

decline death, as that which hath a natural horror and contradiction to the present interest of its preservation; yet when he looked upon it, as his heavenly Father had put it into the order of redemption of the world, it was that "baptism," which he was "straitened, till he had accomplished." And now there is not in the world any condition of prayer which is essential to the duty, or any circumstances of advantage to its performance, but were concentred in this one instance; humility of spirit, lowliness of deportment, importunity of desire, a fervent spirit, a lawful matter, resignation to the will of God, great love, the love of a Son to his Father; which appellative was the form of his address; perseverance; he went thrice, and prayed the same prayer; it was not long, and it was so retired as to have the advantages of a sufficient solitude and opportune recollection; for he was withdrawn from the most of his disciples: and yet not so alone as to lose the benefit of communion; for Peter and the two Boanerges were near him. Christ, in this prayer, which was the most fervent that he ever made on earth, intending to transmit to all the world a precedent of devotion to be transcribed and imitated; that we should cast all our cares, and empty them in the bosom of God, being content to receive such a portion of our trouble back again, which he assigns us for our spiritual emolument.

5. The holy Jesus having in a few words poured out torrents of innocent desires, was pleased still to interrupt his prayer, that he might visit his charge, that "little flock," which was presently after to be "scattered:" he was careful of them in the midst of his agonies; they, in his sufferings, were fast asleep. He awakens them, gives them command to "watch and pray," that is, to be vigilant in the custody of their senses, and observant of all accidents, and to pray that they may be strengthened against all incursions of enemies and temptations; and then returns to prayer; and so a third time; his devotion still increasing with his sorrow[b]. And when his prayer was full, and his sorrow come to a great measure, after the third, God sent his "angel to comfort

[b] Καὶ γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ ἐκτενέστερον προσηύχετο: Luke, xxii. 44. *Extensius orabat*, sic Latinus interpres reddit: Alii plures reddunt per *intensiùs*.

him;" and, by that act of grace, then only expressed, hath taught us to continue our devotions so long as our needs last. It may be, God will not send a comforter till the third time, that is, after a long expectation, and a patient sufferance, and a lasting hope: in the interim God supports us with a secret hand, and, in his own time, will refresh the spirit with the visitations of his angels, with the emissions of comfort from the Spirit, the Comforter. And know this also, that the holy angel, and the Lord of all the angels, stands by every holy person when he prays; and although he draws before his glories the curtain of a cloud, yet in every instant he takes care we shall not perish, and in a just season dissolves the cloud, and makes it to distil in holy dew, and drops sweet as manna, pleasant as nard, and wholesome as the breath of heaven. And such was the consolation which the holy Jesus received by the ministry of the angel, representing to Christ, the Lord of the angels, how necessary it was that he should die for the glory of God[c]; that, in his passion, his justice, wisdom, goodness, power, and mercy, should shine; that, unless he died, all the world should perish, but his blood should obtain their pardon; and that it should open the gates of heaven, repair the ruin of angels, establish a holy church, be productive of innumerable adoptive children to his Father, whom himself should make heirs of glory; and that his passion should soon pass away, his Father hearing and granting his prayer, that "the cup" should pass speedily, though indeed it should pass through him; that it should be attended and followed with a glorious resurrection, with eternal rest and glory of his humanity, with the exaltation of his name, with a supreme dominion over all the world, and that his Father should make him King of kings, and Prince of the Catholic church. These, or whatsoever other comforts the angel ministered, were such considerations which the holy Jesus knew, and the angel knew not but by communication from that God, to whose assumed humanity the angel spake; yet he was pleased to receive comfort from his servant, just as God

[c] Confortatus est, sed tali confortatione quæ dolorem non minuit, sed magis auxit: confortatus enim est ex fructûs magnitudine, non subtractâ doloris amaritudine.—*Beda, in Lucæ* 22.

receives glory from his creatures[d], and as he rejoices in his own works, even because he is good and gracious, and is pleased so to do; and because himself had caused a voluntary sadness to be interposed between the habitual knowledge and the actual consideration of these discourses; and we feel a pleasure, when a friendly hand lays upon our wound the plaister, which ourselves have made, and applies such instruments and considerations of comfort, which we have in notion and an ineffective habit, but cannot reduce them to act, because no man is so apt to be his own comforter: which God hath therefore permitted, that our needs should be the occasion of a mutual charity.

6. It was a great season for the angel's coming, because it was a great necessity, which was incumbent upon our Lord; for his sadness and his agony was so great, mingled and compounded of sorrow and zeal, fear and desire, innocent nature and perfect grace, that he "sweat drops" as great as if the blood had started through little undiscerned fontinels, and outrun the streams and rivers of his cross. Euthymius[e] and Theophylact[f] say, that the evangelists use this as a tragical expression of the greatest agony, and an unusual sweat, it being usual to call the tears of the greatest sorrow, "tears of blood." But, from the beginning of the church, it hath been more generally apprehended literally, and that some blood, mingled with the serous substance, issued from his veins in so great abundance, that they moistened the ground, and bedecked his garment, which stood like a new firmament studded with stars, portending an approaching storm. Now "he came from Bozrah with his garments red and bloody." And this agony verified, concerning the holy Jesus, those words of David, "I am poured out like water, my bones are dispersed, my heart, in the midst of my body, is like melting wax," saith Justin Martyr[g]. Venerable Bede

[d] Cùm tristaris, solamen tristium,
Te solatur civis cœlestium.
Res miranda! solus dans gaudium
Rex à cive sumit solatium. — *Hondemius Anglus.*

[e] In Matt. xxiv. [f] In Lucam, xxii.

[g] Justin Mart. Dial. Tryph. Athanas. lib. vi. de Beat. Filii Dei. Aug. lib. vi. c. 5. de Consecr. Evang. Hier. lib. de Trad. Heb. Iren. lib. iv. c. 31. contra hæres. Idem aiunt Dionys. Alex. Aymonius, Epiphan. et alii.

saith[b], that the descending of these drops of blood upon the earth, besides the general purpose, had also a particular relation to the present infirmities of the apostles, that our blessed Lord obtained of his Father, by the merits of those holy drops, mercies and special support for them; and that effusion redeemed them from the present participation of death. And St. Austin meditates, that the body of our Lord, all overspread with drops of bloody sweat, did prefigure the future state of martyrs, and that his body mystical should be clad in a red garment, variegated with the symbols of labour and passion, sweat and blood; by which himself was pleased to purify his church, and present her to God holy and spotless. What collateral designs and tacit significations might be designed by this mysterious sweat, I know not; certainly it was a sad beginning of a most dolorous passion: and such griefs, which have so violent, permanent, and sudden effects upon the body, which is not of a nature symbolical to interior and immaterial causes, are proclaimed by such marks to be high and violent. We have read of some persons, that the grief and fear of one night hath put a cover of snow upon their heads, as if the labours of thirty years had been extracted, and the quintessence drank off in the passion of that night: but if nature had been capable of a greater or more prodigious impress of passion than a bloody sweat, it must needs have happened in this agony of the holy Jesus, in which he undertook a grief great enough to make up the imperfect contrition of all the saints, and to satisfy for the impenitencies of all the world.

7. By this time the traitor, Judas, was arrived at Gethsemane, and being in the vicinage of the garden, Jesus rises from his prayers, and first calls his disciples from their sleep, and, by an irony, seems to give them leave to "sleep on;" but reproves their drowsiness, when danger is so near, and bids them "henceforth take their rest;" meaning, if they could for danger, which now was, indeed, come to the garden-doors. But the holy Jesus, that it might appear he undertook the passion with choice and a free election, not only refused to fly, but called his apostles to rise, that they might meet his murderers, who came to him "with swords and staves," as if

[b] In Luc. lib. vi.

they were to surprise a prince of armed outlaws, whom without force they could not reduce. So, also, might butchers do well to go armed, when they are pleased to be afraid of lambs, by calling them lions. Judas only discovered his master's retirements, and betrayed him to the opportunities of an armed band; for he could not accuse his master of any word or private action, that might render him obnoxious to suspicion or the law. For such are the rewards of innocence and prudence, that the one secures against sin, the other against suspicion and appearances.

8. The holy Jesus had accustomed to receive every of his disciples after absence with entertainment of a kiss, which was the endearment of persons, and the expression of the oriental civility: and Judas was confident that his Lord would not reject him, whose feet he had washed at the time, when he foretold this event, and therefore had agreed to signify him by this sign[i]; and did so, beginning war with a kiss, and breaking the peace of his Lord by the symbol of kindness; which, because Jesus entertained with much evenness and charitable expressions, calling him "friend[k]," he gave evidence, that if he retained civilities to his greatest enemies in the very acts of hostility, he hath banquets, and crowns, and sceptres for his friends, that adore him with the kisses of charity, and love him with the sincerity of an affectionate spirit. But our blessed Lord, besides his essential sweetness and serenity of spirit, understood well, how great benefits himself and all the world were to receive by occasion of that act of Judas: and our greatest enemy does, by accident, to holy persons, the offices of their dearest friends; telling us our faults, without a cloak to cover their deformities, but, out of malice, laying open the circumstances of aggravation; doing us affronts, from whence we have an instrument of our patience; and restraining us from scandalous crimes, lest we "become a scorn and reproof to them that hate us." And it is none of God's least mercies, that he

[i] O signum sacrilegum! O placitum fugiendum! ubi ab osculo incipitur bellum, et per pacis indicium pacis rumpitur sacramentum. — *Aug. Serm.* 12.

[k] Si honoras, ô dulcis Domine,
Inimicum amici nomine,
Quales erunt, amoris carmine
Qui te canunt et modulamine. — *Hondem. de Passione.*

permits enmities amongst men; that animosities and peevishness may reprove more sharply, and correct with more severity and simplicity, than the gentle hand of friends, who are apter to bind our wounds up, than to discover them and make them smart; but they are to us an excellent probation, how friends may best do the offices of friends, if they would take the plainness of enemies in accusing, and still mingle it with the tenderness and good affections of friends. But our blessed Lord called Judas "friend," as being the instrument of bringing him to glory, and all the world to pardon, if they would.

9. Jesus himself begins the inquiry, and leads them into their errand, and tells them he was Jesus of Nazareth, whom they sought. But this also, which was an answer so gentle, had in it a strength greater than the eastern wind or the voice of thunder; for God was in that "still voice," and it struck them down to the ground[1]. And yet they, and so do we, still persist to persecute our Lord, and to provoke the eternal God, who can, with the breath of his mouth, with a word, or a sign, or a thought, reduce us into nothing, or into a worse condition, even an eternal duration of torments, and co-habitation with a never-ending misery. And if we cannot bear a soft answer of the merciful God, how shall we dare to provoke the wrath of the Almighty Judge? But in this instance there was a rare mixture of effects, as there was in Christ of natures; the voice of a man, and the power of God. For it is observed by the doctors of the primitive ages[m], that, from the nativity of our Lord to the day of his death, the divinity and humanity did so communicate in effects, that no great action passed, but it was like the sun shining through a cloud, or a beauty with a thin veil drawn over it; they gave illustration and testimony to each other. The holy Jesus was born a tender and a crying infant; but is adored by the magi as a king, by the angels as their God. He is circumcised as a man; but a name is given him, to signify him to be the Saviour of the world. He flies into Egypt, like a distressed child, under the conduct of his helpless parents; but

[1] Πάντες ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι μαχήμονες ἀσπιδιῶνται
Αὐτόματοι πίπτοντες ἐπειστόρνυντο κονίῃ,
Πρήνεες, ὀιστευθέντες ἀτευχέϊ λαίλαπι φωνῆς. — *Nonn.*

[m] S. Cyril. S. Athanas. S. Leo, &c.

as soon as he enters the country, the idols fall down, and confess his true divinity. He is presented in the temple as the son of man; but by Simeon and Anna he is celebrated, with divine praises, for the Messias, the Son of God. He is baptized in Jordan as a sinner; but the Holy Ghost, descending upon him, proclaimed him to be the well-beloved of God. He is hungry in the desert as a man; but sustained his body without meat and drink, for forty days together, by the power of his divinity: there he is tempted of Satan as a weak man, and the angels of light minister unto him as their supreme Lord. And now, a little before his death, when he was to take upon him all the affronts, miseries, and exinanitions of the most miserable, he receives testimonies from above, which are most wonderful; for he was transfigured upon Mount Tabor, entered triumphantly into Jerusalem, had the acclamations of the people; when he was dying, he darkened the sun; when he was dead, he opened the sepulchres; when he was fast nailed to the cross, he made the earth to tremble; now, when he suffers himself to be apprehended by a guard of soldiers, he strikes them all to the ground only by replying to their answer: that the words of the prophet might be verified, "Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak; behold! it is I[n]."

10. The soldiers and servants of the Jews having recovered from their fall, and risen by the permission of Jesus, still persisted in their inquiry after him, who was present, ready, and desirous to be sacrificed. He, therefore, permitted himself to be taken, but not his disciples: for he it was that set them their bounds; and he secured his apostles to be witnesses of his suffering and his glories; and this work was the redemption of the world, in which no man could have an active share[o]; he alone was to tread the wine-press; and time enough they should be called to a fellowship of sufferings. But Jesus went to them, and they bound him with cords; and so began our liberty and redemption from slavery, and sin, and cursings, and death. But he was bound faster

[n] Isa. lii. 6.

[o] Semovit à periculo discipulos, non ignorans ad se solum certamen illud et opus salutis nostræ pertinere. Regnantis enim, et non servientis, naturæ opus est. — *S. Cyril.*

by bands of his own; his father's will, and mercy, pity of the world, prophecies, and mysteries[p], and love held him fast: and these cords were as "strong as death;" and the cords, which the soldiers' malice put upon his holy hands, were but symbols and figures, his own compassion and affection were the morals. But yet he undertook this short restraint and condition of a prisoner, that all sorts of persecution and exterior calamities might be hallowed by his susception; and these pungent sorrows should, like bees, sting him, and leave their sting behind, that all the sweetnesses should remain for us. Some melancholic devotions have, from uncertain stories, added sad circumstances of the first violence done to our Lord; that they bound him with three cords, and that with so much violence, that they caused blood to start from his tender hands; that they spate then, also, upon him, with a violence and incivility like that, which their fathers had used towards Hur, the brother of Aaron, whom they choaked with impure spittings into his throat, because he refused to consent to the making a golden calf. These particulars are not transmitted by certain records. Certain it is, they wanted no malice, and now no power; for the Lord had given himself into their hands.

11. St. Peter seeing his master thus ill-used, asked, "Master, shall we strike with the sword?" and before he had his answer, cut off the ear of Malchus. Two swords there were in Christ's family, and St. Peter bore one; either because he was to kill the paschal lamb, or, according to the custom of the country, to secure them against beasts of prey, which in that region were frequent, and dangerous in the night. But now he used it in an unlawful war; he had no competent authority; it was against the ministers of his lawful prince, and against our prince we must not draw a sword for Christ himself, himself having forbidden us; as his "kingdom is not of this world," so neither were his defences secular: he could have called for many legions of angels for his guard, if he had so pleased; and we read that one angel slew 185,000 armed men in one night; and, therefore, it was a vast power, which was at the command of our Lord; and he needs not such low auxiliaries as an army of rebels, or a

[p] Dominum omnium mysteria, non arma, tenuerunt. — *S. Amb. in Lucam.*

navy of pirates, to defend his cause: he first lays the foundation of our happiness in his sufferings, and hath ever since supported religion by patience and suffering, and in poverty, and all the circumstances and conjunctures of improbable causes. Fighting for religion is certain to destroy charity, but not certain to support faith. St. Peter, therefore, may use his keys, but he is commanded to put up his sword; and he did so; and presently he and all his fellows fairly ran away: and yet that course was much the more Christian; for though it had in it much infirmity, yet it had no malice. In the mean time, the Lord was pleased to touch the ear of Malchus, and he cured it; adding to the first instance of power, in throwing them to the ground, an act of miraculous mercy, curing the wounds of an enemy made by a friend. But neither did this pierce their callous and obdurate spirits; but they led him in uncouth ways, and through the brook Cedron[q], in which it is said the ruder soldiers plunged him, and passed upon him all the affronts and rudenesses which an insolent and cruel multitude could think of, to signify their contempt and their rage. And such is the nature of evil men, who, when they are not softened by the instruments and arguments of grace, are much hardened by them; such being the purpose of God, that either grace shall cure sin, or accidentally increase it; that it shall either pardon it, or bring it to greater punishment: for so I have seen healthful medicines, abused by the incapacities of a healthless body, become fuel to a fever, and increase the distemperature, from indisposition to a sharp disease, and from thence to the margent of the grave. But it was otherwise in Saul, whom Jesus threw to the ground with a more angry sound than these persecutors: but Saul rose a saint, and they persisted devils; and the grace of God distinguished the events.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, make me by thy example to conform to the will of that eternal God, who is our Father, merciful and gracious; that I may choose all those accidents, which his Providence hath actually disposed to me; that I may know

[q] De torrente in via bibet. — *Ps.* cx. *ult.*

no desires but his commands, and his will; and that in all afflictions I may fly thither for mercy, pardon, and support; and may wait for deliverance in such times and manners, which the Father hath reserved in his own power, and graciously dispenses, according to his infinite wisdom and compassion. Holy Jesus, give me the gift and spirit of prayer; and do thou, by thy gracious intercession, supply my ignorances, and passionate desires, and imperfect choices; procuring and giving to me such returns of favour, which may support my needs, and serve the ends of religion and the Spirit, which thy wisdom chooses, and thy passion hath purchased, and thy grace loves to bestow upon all thy saints and servants. Amen.

II.

Eternal God, sweetest Jesu, who didst receive Judas with the affection of a Saviour, and sufferedst him to kiss thy cheek, with the serenity and tranquillity of God; and didst permit the soldiers to bind thee, with patience exemplary to all ages of martyrs; and didst cure the wound of thy enemy, with the charity of a parent, and the tenderness of an infinite pity; O kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth, embrace me with the entertainments of a gracious Lord, and let my soul dwell and feast in thee, who art the repository of eternal sweetness and refreshments. Bind me, O Lord, with those bands which tied thee fast, the chains of love; that such holy union may dissolve the cords of vanity, and confine the bold pretensions of usurping passions, and imprison all extravagancies of an impertinent spirit, and lead sin captive to the dominion of grace and sanctified reason; that I also may imitate all the parts of thy holy passion; and may, by thy bands, get my liberty; by thy kiss, enkindle charity; by the touch of thy hand and the breath of thy mouth, have all my wounds cured, and restored to the integrity of a holy penitent, and the purities of innocence; that I may love thee, and please thee, and live with thee for ever, O holy and sweetest Jesu. Amen.

Considerations upon the Scourging, and other Accidents, happening from the Apprehension till the Crucifixion of Jesus.

1. THE house of Annas stood in the Mount Sion, and in the way to the house of Caiaphas; and thither he was led, as to the first stage of their triumph for their surprise of a person so feared and desired; and there a naughty person smote the holy Jesus upon the face, for saying to Annas, that he had made his doctrine public, and that all the people were able to give account of it: to whom the Lamb of God shewed as much meekness and patience in his answer, as in his answer to Annas he had shewed prudence and modesty. For, now that they had taken Jesus, they wanted a crime to object against him, and therefore were desirous to snatch occasion from his discourses, to which they resolved to tempt him, by questions and affronts: but his answer was general and indefinite, safe and true, enough to acquit his doctrine from suspicions of secret designs, and yet secure against their present snares; for now himself, who always had the "innocence of doves," was to join with it the prudence and wariness of serpents; not to prevent death, (for that he was resolved to suffer,) but that they might be destitute of all appearance of a just cause on his part. Here it was that Judas received his money; and here that holy face, which was designed to be that object, in the beholding of which much of the celestial glory doth consist; that face which the angels stare upon with wonder, like infants at a bright sunbeam, was smitten extrajudicially by an incompetent person, with circumstances of despite, in the presence of a judge, in a full assembly, and none reproved the insolence and the cruelty of the affront: for they resolved to use him as they use wolves and tigers, with all things that may be destructive, violent, and impious: and in this the injury was heightened, because the blow was said to be given by Malchus, an Idumæan slave, and, therefore, a contemptible person[a]; but far more unworthy by his ingratitude, for so he repaid the holy Jesus for working a miracle and healing his ear. But so the Scripture was fulfilled;

[a] Malchus Idumæis missus captivus ab oris.
Vida, Epist. Cremon. lib. ii. Christeidos. Isa. l. 6. Micah, v. 1.

"He shall give his body to the smiters, and his cheeks to the nippers," saith the prophet Isaiah; and, "They shall smite the cheek of the Judge of Israel," saith Micah. And this very circumstance of the passion Lactantius affirms to have been foretold by the Erythræan sibyl [b]. But no meekness, or indifference, could engage our Lord not to protest his innocence: and though, following his steps, we must walk in the regions of patience, and tranquillity, and admirable toleration of injuries; yet we may represent such defences of ourselves, which, by not resisting the sentence, may testify that our suffering is undeserved: and if our innocence will not preserve our lives, it will advance our title to a better; and every good cause ill judged shall be brought to another tribunal, to receive a just and unerring sentence.

2. Annas, having suffered this unworthy usage towards a person so excellent [c], sent him away to Caiaphas, who had formerly, in a full council, resolved he should die; yet now, palliating the design with the scheme of a tribunal, they seek out for witnesses, and the witnesses are to seek for allegations; and when they find them, they are to seek for proof, and those proofs were to seek for unity and consent, and nothing was ready for their purposes; but they were forced to use the semblance of a judicial process, that, because they were to make use of Pilate's authority to put him to death, they might persuade Pilate to accept of their examination and conviction without farther inquiry. But such had been the excellency, and exemplar piety, and prudence, of the life of Jesus, that, if they pretended against him questions of their law, they were not capital in a Roman court: if they affirmed, that he had moved the people to sedition and affected the kingdom, they saw that all the world would convince them of false testimony. At last, after many attempts, they accused him for a figurative speech, a trope which they could not understand; which, if it had been spoken in a literal sense, and had been acted, too, according to the letter, had been so far from a fault, that it would have been a prodigy of power; and it had been easier to raise the temple of Jerusalem, than to raise the temple of his body.

[b] Εἰς ἀνόμων χεῖρας καὶ ἀπίστων ὕστερον ἥξει,
Δώσουσίν τε Θεῷ βαπίσματα χερσὶν ἀνάγνοις. — *Instit.* lib. iv. c. 18.

[c] Victor in S. Marc.

In the mean time, the Lamb of God left his cause to defend itself, under the protection of his heavenly Father; not only because himself was determined to die, but because if he had not, those premises could never have inferred it. But this silence of the holy Jesus fulfilled a prophecy, it made his enemies full of murmur and amazement, it made them to see that he despised the accusations, as certain and apparent calumnies; but that himself was fearless of the issue, and, in the sense of morality and mysteries, taught us not to be too apt to excuse ourselves, when the semblance of a fault lies upon us, unless, by some other duty, we are obliged to our defences; since he, who was most innocent, was most silent: and it was expedient, that, as the first Adam increased his sin by a vain apology, the silence and sufferance of the second Adam should expiate and reconcile it [d].

3. But Caiaphas had a reserve, which he knew should do the business in that assembly; he adjured him, by God, to tell him if he "were the Christ." The holy Jesus, being adjured by so sacred a name, would not now refuse an answer, lest it might not consist with that honour which is due to it, and which he always paid, and that he might neither despise the authority of the high priest, nor, upon so solemn occasion, be wanting to that great truth, which he came down to earth to persuade to the world. And, when three such circumstances concur, it is enough to open our mouths, though we let in death. And so did our Lord, confessed himself to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God." And this the high priest was pleased, as the design was laid, to call "blasphemy;" and there they voted him to die. Then it was "the high priest rent his clothes;" the veil of the temple was rent when the passion was finished; the clothes of the priests at the beginning of it: and as that signified the departing of the synagogue, and laying religion open; so did the rending the garments of Caiaphas prophetically signify, that the priesthood should be rent from him, and from the nation [e]. And thus the personated and theatrical admiration at Jesus, became the type of his own punishment,

[d] Taciturnitas Christi apologiam Adæ absolvit. — *S. Hieron. in Marc.*

[e] Conscidit vestimenta sua, ostendens turpitudinem suam, et nuditatem animæ, et mysterium manifestans, conscindendum esse sacerdotium vetus.— *Origen.* Idem ait S. Hier.

and consigned the nation to deletion: and usually God so dispenses his judgments, that when men personate the tragedies of others, they really act their own.

4. Whilst these things were acting concerning the Lord, a sad accident happened to his servant Peter: for, being engaged in strange and evil company, in the midst of danger, surprised with a question without time to deliberate an answer, to find subterfuges, or to fortify himself, he denied his Lord shamefully, with some boldness at first, and this grew to a licentious confidence, and then to impudence, and denying, with perjury, that he knew not his Lord, who yet was known to him as his own heart, and was dearer than his eyes, and for whom he professed, but a little before, he would die; but did not do so till many years after. But thus he became to us a sad example of human infirmity[f]; and if the prince of the apostles fell so foully, it is full of pity, but not to be upbraided, if we see the fall of lesser stars. And yet, that we may prevent so great a ruin, we must not mingle with such company, who will provoke or scorn us into sin; and if we do, yet we must stand upon our guard, that a sudden motion do not surprise us: or if we be arrested, yet let us not enter farther into our sin, like wild beasts intricating themselves by their impatience. For there are some, who, being ashamed and impatient to have been engaged, take sanctuary in boldness and a shameless abetting it, so running into the darkness of hell to hide their nakedness. But he also, by returning, and rising instantly, became to us a rare example of penitence; and his not lying long in the crime did facilitate this restitution. For the spirit of God being extinguished by our works of darkness, is like a taper, which if, as soon as the flame is blown out, it be brought to the fire, it sucks light, and, without trouble, is re-enkindled; but if it cools into death and stiffness, it requires a longer stay and trouble. The holy Jesus, in the midst of his own sufferings, forgat not his servant's danger, but was pleased to look upon him when the cock crew; and the cock was the preacher, and the look of Jesus was the grace that made the sermon effectual: and because he was but newly fallen,

[f] Ὃν τρόπον αἱ σωμαὶ τοῖς σώμασιν ἥπτονται, οὕτως αἱ ἁμαρτίαι ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἀκολουθοῦσιν.— *Agapet. Diac. Capit. admonit.* 69.

Leo Serm. 9. de Pass. Dom. et Euthym. in hunc locum.

and his habitual love of his Master, though interrupted, yet had suffered no natural abatement, he returned, with the swiftness of an eagle, to the embraces and primitive affections of his Lord.

5. By this time suppose sentence given, Caiaphas prejudging all the Sanhedrim; for he first declared Jesus to have spoken blasphemy, and the fact to be notorious, and then asked their votes; which whoso then should have denied, must have contested the judgment of the high priest, who, by the favour of the Romans, was advanced, (Valerius Gratus, who was president of Judea, having been his patron,) and his faction potent, and his malice great, and his heart set upon this business; all which inconveniences none of them durst have suffered, unless he had had the confidence greater than of an apostle at that time. But this sentence was but like strong dispositions to an enraged fever; he was only declared apt and worthy for death, they had no power at that time to inflict it; but yet they let loose all the fury of mad men, and insolency of wounded smarting soldiers: and although, from the time of his being in the house of Annas, till the council met, they had used him with studied indignities; yet now they renewed and doubled the unmercifulness, and their injustice, to so great a height, that their injuries must needs have been greater than his patience, if his patience had been less than infinite. For thus man's redemption grows up, as the load swells which the holy Jesus bare for us; for these were our portion, and we, having turned the flowers of Paradise into thistles, should, for ever, have felt their infelicity, had not Jesus paid the debt. But he bearing them upon his tender body with an even, and excellent, and dispassionate spirit, offered up these beginnings of sufferings to his Father, to obtain pardon even for them that injured him, and for all the world.

6. Judas now, seeing that this matter went farther than he intended it, repented of his fact. For although evil persons are, in the progress of their iniquity, invited on by new arguments, and supported by confidence and a careless spirit: yet, when iniquity is come to the height, or so great a proportion, that it is apt to produce despair, or an intolerable condition, then the devil suffers the conscience to thaw and grow tender; but it is the tenderness of a bile, it is

soreness rather and a new disease; and either it comes when the time of repentance is past, or leads to some act which shall make the pardon to be impossible: and so it happened here. For Judas, either impatient of the shame, or of the sting, was thrust on to despair of pardon, with a violence as hasty and as great as were his needs. And despair is very often used like the bolts and bars of hell gates; it seizes upon them that had entered into the suburbs of eternal death by an habitual sin, and it secures them against all retreat. And the devil is forward enough to bring a man to repentance, provided it be too late: and Esau wept bitterly, and repented him, and the five foolish virgins lift up their voice aloud, when the gates were shut, and in hell men shall repent to all eternity. But I consider the very great folly and infelicity of Judas: it was at midnight he received his money in the house of Annas, betimes in that morning he repented his bargain; he threw the money back again, but his sin stuck close, and, it is thought, to a sad eternity. Such is the purchase of treason, and the reward of covetousness; it is cheap in its offers, momentary in its possession, unsatisfying in the fruition, uncertain in the stay, sudden in its departure, horrid in the remembrance, and a ruin, a certain and miserable ruin, is in the event. When Judas came in that sad condition, and told his miserable story to them that set him on work, they let him go away unpitied; he had served their ends in betraying his Lord; and those that hire such servants, use to leave them in the disaster, to shame, and to sorrow: and so did the priests, but took the money, and refused to put it into the treasury, because it was "the price of blood[s];" but they made no scruple to take it from the treasury, to buy that blood. Any thing seems lawful, that serves the ends of ambitious and bloody persons, and then they are scrupulous in their cases of conscience, when nothing of interest does intervene: for evil men make religion the servant of interest, and sometimes weak men think, that it is the fault of the religion, and suspect that all of it is a design, because many

[s] Indè sacerdotes, pretium quòd sanguinis esset,
Illicitum fantes adytis jam condere templi,
Quod dare tum licitum, dum sanguis distraheretur,
Credebant ——— ———

Juvencus. Hist. Evang. lib. iv.

great politics make it so. The end of the tragedy was, that Judas died with an ignoble death, marked with the circumstances of a horrid judgment [h], and perished by the most infamous hands in the world, that is, by his own. Which, if it be confronted against the excellent spirit of St. Peter, who did an act as contradictory to his honour, and the grace of God, as could be easily imagined; yet, taking sanctuary in the arms of his Lord, he lodged in his heart for ever, and became an example to all the world, of the excellency of the Divine mercy, and the efficacy of a holy hope, and a hearty, timely, and an operative repentance.

7. But now all things were ready for the purpose, the high priest and all his council go, along with the holy Jesus, to the house of Pilate, hoping he would verify their sentence, and bring it to execution, that they might once be rid of their fears, and enjoy their sin and their reputation quietly. St. Basil affirms, that the high priest caused the holy Jesus to be led with a cord about his neck [i], and, in memory of that, the priests, for many ages, wore a stole about theirs. But the Jews did it, according to the custom of the nation, to signify he was condemned to death: they desired Pilate that he would crucify him, they having found him worthy. And when Pilate inquired into the particulars, they gave him a general and indefinite answer; "If he were not guilty, we would not have brought him unto thee:" they intended not to make Pilate judge of the cause, but executor of their cruelty. But Pilate had not learned to be guided by an implicit faith of such persons, which he knew to be malicious and violent; and, therefore, still called for instances and arguments of their accusation. And that all the world might see with how great unworthiness they prosecuted the Messias, they chiefly there accused him of such crimes, upon which themselves condemned him not, and which they knew to be false, but yet likely to move Pilate, if he had been passionate or inconsiderate in his sentences; "He offered to make himself a king." This discourse happened at the entry of the prætorium; for the Jews, who made no conscience of

[h] Non potuit Judas pejore manu perire, et quamvis sceleratum occiderit, non debuit tamen. — *S. August. de Civit. Dei*, lib. i. c. 17.

[i] In Mystagog. Eccles. Author. Com. in Marc. apud S. Hieron.

killing the King of heaven, made a conscience of the external customs and ceremonies of their law, which had in them no interior sanctity, which were apt to separate them from the nations, and remark them with characters of religion and abstraction: it would defile them to go to a Roman forum, where a capital action was to be judged; and yet the effusion of the best blood in the world was not esteemed against their religion: so violent and blind is the spirit of malice, which turns humanity into cruelty, wisdom into craft, diligence into subornation, and religion into superstition.

8. Two other articles they alleged against him: but the first concerned not Pilate, and the second was involved in the third, and, therefore, he chose to examine him upon this only, of his being "a King." To which the holy Jesus answered, that it is true, he was a King indeed, but "not of this world;" his throne is heaven, the angels are his courtiers, and the whole creation are his subjects: his regiment is spiritual, his judicatories are the courts of conscience and church-tribunals, and at dooms-day the clouds: the tribute which he demands are, conformity to his laws, faith, hope, and charity; no other gabels but the duties of a holy spirit, and the expresses of a religious worship, and obedient will, and a consenting understanding. And in all this, Pilate thought the interest of Cæsar was not invaded. For certain it is, the discipline of Jesus confirmed it much, and supported it by the strongest pillars. And here Pilate saw how impertinent and malicious their accusation was: and we, who declaim against the unjust proceedings of the Jews against our dearest Lord, should do well to take care that we, in accusing any of our brethren, either with malicious purpose, or with an uncharitable circumstance, do not commit the same fault which, in them, we so hate and accuse. Let no man speak any thing of his neighbour but what is true: and yet, if a truth be heightened by the biting rhetoric of a satirical spirit, extended and drawn forth in circumstances and arts of aggravation, the truth becomes a load to the guilty person, is a prejudice to the sentence of the judge, and hath not so much as the excuse of zeal, much less the charity of Christianity. Sufficient to every man is the plain story of his crime; and to excuse as much of it as we can,

would better become us, who perish unless we be excused for infinite irregularities. But if we add this also, that we accuse our brethren before them that may amend them, and reform their error, if we pity their persons, and do not hate them, if we seek nothing of their disgrace, and make not their shame public, but when the public is necessarily concerned, or the state of the man's sin requires it; then our accusations are charitable: but if they be not, all such accusations are accepted by Christ with as much displeasure, in proportion to the degree of the malice, and the proper effect, as was this accusation of his own person.

9. But Pilate, having pronounced Jesus innocent, and perceiving he was a Galilean, sent him to Herod, as being a more competent person to determine concerning one of his own jurisdiction. Herod was glad at the honour done to him, and the person brought him, being now desirous to see some miracle done before him. But the holy Jesus spake not one word there, nor did any sign; so to reprove the sottish carelessness of Herod, who, living in the place of Jesus' abode, never had seen his person, or heard his sermons. And if we neglect the opportunities of grace, and refuse to hear the voice of Christ in the time of mercy and Divine appointment, we may arrive at that state of misery, in which Christ will refuse to speak one word of comfort to us; and the homilies of the Gospel shall be dead letters, and the spirit not at all refreshed, nor the understanding instructed, nor the affections moved, nor the will determined; but because we have, during all our time, stopped our ears, in his time God will stop his mouth, and shut up the springs of grace, that we shall receive no refreshment, or instruction, or pardon, or felicity. Jesus suffered not himself to be moved at the pertinacious accusations of the Jews, nor the desires of the tyrant, but persevered in silence, till Herod and his servants despised him, and dismissed him. For so it became our High Priest, who was to sanctify all our sufferings, to consecrate affronts and scorn, that we may learn to endure contempt, and to suffer ourselves, in a religious cause, to be despised; and when it happens in any other, to remember that we have our dearest Lord for a precedent, of bearing it with admirable simplicity and equanimity of deportment: and it is a mighty stock of self-love that dwells in our spirits,

which makes us, of all afflictions, most impatient of this. But Jesus endured this despite, and suffered this to be added, that he was exposed in scorn to the boys of the streets. For Herod caused him to be arrayed in white, sent him out to be scorned by the people and hooted at by idle persons, and so remitted him to Pilate. And since that accident to our Lord, the church hath not indecently chosen to clothe her priests with albs, or white garments; and it is a symbolical intimation and representment of that part of the passion and affront, which Herod passed upon the holy Jesus: and this is so far from deserving a reproof, that it were to be wished all the children of the church would imitate all those graces, which Christ exercised when he wore that garment[k], which she hath taken up in ceremony and thankful memory; that is, in all their actions and sufferings be so estranged from secular arts and mixtures of the world, so intent upon religion, and active in all its interests, so indifferent to all acts of providence, so equal in all chances, so patient of every accident, so charitable to enemies, and so undetermined by exterior events, that nothing may draw us forth from the severities of our religion, or entice us from the retirements of a recollected, and sober, and patient spirit, or make us to depart from the courtesies of piety, though, for such adhesion and pursuit, we be esteemed fools, or ignorant, or contemptible.

10. When Pilate had received the holy Jesus, and found that Herod had sent him back uncondemned, he attempted to rescue him from their malice, by making him a donative and a freed man, at the petition of the people. But they preferred a murderer and a rebel, Barabbas, before him; for themselves being rebels against the King of heaven, loved to acquit persons criminal in the same kind of sin, rather than their Lord, against whom they took up all the arms which they could receive from violence and perfect malice, "desiring to have him crucified, who raised the dead, and to have the other released, who destroyed the living[l]." And when Pilate saw they were set upon it, he

[k] Θεῷ δὲ θύε διὰ τέλους δίκαιος ὤν,
Μὴ λαμπρὸς ὢν ταῖς χλαμύσιν, ὡς τῇ καρδίᾳ. — *Menand.*

[l] S. Aug. Tract. 15. in Joann.

consented, and delivered him first to be scourged[m]; which the soldiers executed with violence and unrelenting hands, opening his virginal body to nakedness, and tearing his tender flesh till the pavement was purpled with a shower of holy blood. It is reported in the ecclesiastical story, that when St. Agnes and St. Barbara, holy virgins and martyrs, were stripped naked to execution, God, pitying their great shame and trouble to have their nakedness discovered, made for them a veil of light, and sent them to a modest and desired death. But the holy Jesus, who chose all sorts of shame and confusion, that, by a fulness of suffering, he might expiate his Father's anger, and that he might consecrate to our sufferance all kind of affront and passion, endured even the shame of nakedness at the time of his scourging, suffering himself to be divested of his robes, that we might be clothed with that stole he put off: for therefore he took on him the state of sinning Adam, and became naked, that we might first be clothed with righteousness, and then with immortality.

11. After they had scourged him without remorse, they "clothed him with purple, and crowned him with thorns," and "put a cane in his hand for a sceptre," and "bowed their knees before him," and "saluted him" with mockery, with a "Hail, King of the Jews!" and they "beat him," and "spat upon him;" and then Pilate brought him forth, and showed this sad spectacle to the people, hoping this might move them to compassion, who never loved to see a man prosperous, and are always troubled to see the same man in misery. But the earth, which was cursed for Adam's sake, and was sowed with thorns and thistles, produced the full harvest of them, and the second Adam gathered them all, and made garlands of them, as ensigns of his victory, which he was now in pursuit of, against sin, the grave, and hell. And we also may make our thorns, which are in themselves pungent and dolorous, to be a crown, if we bear them patiently, and unite them to Christ's passion, and offer them

[m] Vinctus in his Dominus stetit ædibus, atque columnis
Annexus tergum dedit ut servile flagellis:
Perstat adhuc templumque gerit veneranda columna.
Nosque decet cunctis immunes vivere flagris. — *Prudent.*
Cernitur in toto corpore sculptus amor. — *Naz. in Chr. Patien.*

to his honour, and bear them in his cause, and rejoice in them for his sake. And indeed, after such a grove of thorns growing upon the head of our Lord, to see one of Christ's members soft, delicate, and effeminate, is a great indecency, next to this of seeing the Jews use the King of glory with the greatest reproach and infamy.

12. But nothing prevailing, nor the innocence of Jesus, nor his immunity from the sentence of Herod, nor the industry and diligence of Pilate, nor the misery, nor the sight of the afflicted Lamb of God, at last (for so God decreed to permit it, and Christ to suffer it,) Pilate gave sentence of death upon him, having first washed his hands; of which God served his end, to declare the innocence of his Son, of which, in this whole process, he was most curious, and suffered not the least probability to adhere to him; yet Pilate served no end of his, nor preserved any thing of his innocence. He that rails upon a prince, and cries, Saving your honour, you are a tyrant; and he that strikes a man upon the face, and cries him mercy, and undoes him, and says it was in jest, does just like that person that sins against God, and thinks to be excused by saying it was against his conscience; that is washing our hands when they are stained in blood, as if a ceremony of purification were enough to cleanse a soul from the stains of a spiritual impurity. So some refuse not to take any oath in times of persecution, and say it obliges not, because it was forced, and done against their wills; as if the doing of it were washed off by protesting against it, whereas the protesting against it declares me criminal, if I rather choose not death than that which I profess to be a sin. But all the persons which co-operated in this death were in this life consigned to a fearful judgment after it. The Jews took the blood (which Pilate seemed to wash off) "upon themselves and their children," and the blood of this Paschal Lamb stuck upon their forehead, and marked them, not to escape, but to fall under the sword of the destroying angel, and they perished either by a more hasty death, or, shortly after, in the extirpation and miserable ruin of their nation. And Pilate, who had a less share in the crime, yet had a black character of a secular judgment; for, not long after, he was, by Vitellius, the president of Syria, sent to Rome, to answer to the crimes

objected against him by the Jews, whom to please he had done so much violence to his conscience; and, by Cæsar's sentence, he was banished to Vienna, deprived of all his honours, where he lived ingloriously, till, by impatience of his calamity, he killed himself with his own hand. And thus the blood of Jesus, shed for the salvation of the world, became to them a curse; and that which purifies the saints stuck to them that shed it, and mingled it not with the tears of repentance, to be a leprosy loathsome and incurable. So manna turns to worms, and the wine of angels to vinegar and lees, when it is received into impure vessels, or tasted by wanton palates; and the sun himself produces rats and serpents, when it reflects upon the dirt of Nilus.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and immaculate Lamb of God, who wert pleased to suffer shame and sorrow, to be brought before tribunals, to be accused maliciously, betrayed treacherously, condemned unjustly, and scourged most rudely, suffering the most severe and most unhandsome afflictions which could be procured by potent, subtle, and extremest malice, and didst choose this out of love greater than the love of mothers, more affectionate than the tears of joy and pity dropped from the eyes of most passionate women, by these fontinels of blood issuing forth life, and health, and pardon upon all thine enemies; teach me to apprehend the baseness of sin, in proportion to the greatest of those calamities which my sin made it necessary for thee to suffer, that I may hate the cause of thy sufferings, and adore thy mercy, and imitate thy charity, and copy out thy patience and humility, and love thy person to the uttermost extent and degrees of my affections. Lord, what am I, that the eternal Son of God should suffer one stripe for me? But thy love is infinite: and how great a misery is it to provoke by sin so great a mercy, and despise so miraculous a goodness, and to do fresh despite to the Son of God! But our sins are innumerable, and our infirmities are mighty. Dearest Jesu, pity me, for I am accused by my own conscience, and am found guilty; I am stripped naked of my innocence, and bound fast by lust, and

tormented with stripes and wounds of enraged appetites. But let thy innocence excuse me, the robes of thy righteousness clothe me, thy bondage set me free, and thy stripes heal me; that thou being my Advocate, my Physician, my Patron, and my Lord, I may be adopted into the union of thy merits, and partake of the efficacy of thy sufferings, and be crowned as thou art, having my sins changed to virtues, and my thorns to rays of glory under thee, our Head, in the participations of eternity, O holy and immaculate Lamb of God. Amen.

DISCOURSE XX.

Of Death, and the due Manner of Preparation to it.

1. THE holy Spirit of God hath in Scripture revealed to us but one way of preparing to death, and that is, by a holy life; and there is nothing in all the book of life concerning this exercise of address to death, but such advices which suppose the dying person in a state of grace. St. James indeed counsels[a], that in sickness we should send for the ministers ecclesiastical, and that "they pray over us," and that we "confess our sins," and "they shall be forgiven;" that is, those prayers are of great efficacy for the removing the sickness, and taking off that punishment of sin, and healing them in a certain degree, according to the efficacy of the ministry, and the dispositions or capacities of the sick person. But we must know, that oftentimes universal effects are attributed to partial causes; because, by the analogy of Scripture, we are taught, that all the body of holy actions and ministries are to unite in production of the event, and that, without that adunation, one thing alone cannot operate; but because no one alone does the work, but by an united power, therefore indefinitely the effect is ascribed sometimes to one, sometimes to another, meaning, that one as much as the other, that is, all together, are to work the pardon and the grace. But the doctrine of pre-

[a] James, v. 14, &c.

paration to death we are clearest taught in the parable of the ten virgins[b]. Those who were wise stood waiting for the coming of the bridegroom, their lamps burning; only when the lord was at hand, at the notice of his coming published, they trimmed their lamps, and they, so disposed, went forth and met him, and entered with him into his interior and eternal joys. They whose lamps did not stand ready beforehand, expecting the uncertain hour, were shut forth, and bound in darkness. "Watch, therefore," so our Lord applies and expounds the parable, "for ye know not the day, nor the hour, of the coming of the Son of Man[c]." Whenever the arrest of death seizes us, unless before that notice we had oil in our vessels, that is, grace in our hearts, habitual grace, (for nothing else can reside or dwell there, an act cannot inhabit or be in a vessel,) it is too late to make preparation. But they who have it, may, and must prepare, that is, they must stir the fire, trim the vessel, make it more actual in its exercise and productions, full of ornament, advantages, and degrees. And that is all we know from Scripture concerning preparation.

2. And indeed, since all our life we are dying, and this minute in which I now write, death divides with me, and hath got the surer part and more certain possession, it is but reasonable, that we should always be doing the offices of preparation[d]. If to-day we were not dying and passing on to our grave, then we might with more safety defer our work till the morrow: but as fuel in a furnace, in every degree of its heat and reception of the flame, is converting into fire and ashes, and the disposing it to the last mutation, is the same work with the last instance of its change; so is the age of

[b] Matt. xxv. Ἀλλ' εὐκλεῶς τοι κατθανεῖν χάρις βροτῷ.—*Æschyl. Agamemn.*

[c] Matt. xxv. 13.

[d] ——— festinat decurrere velox
Flosculus angustæ, miseræque brevissima vitæ
Portio———
——— Τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν
Ἅπαντ' ἀπήμων τὸν δι' αἰῶνος χρόνον;
Τὸ μόρσιμον γὰρ τόν τ' ἐλεύθερον μένει,
Καὶ τὸν πρὸς ἄλλης δεσποτούμενον χερός.—*Æschyl. Agam.*
Cras hoc fiet, idem cras fiet. Quid quasi magnum
Nempe diem donas? Sed cùm lux altera venit,
Jam cras hesternum consumpsimus; ecce aliud cras
Egerit hos annos, et semper paulum erit ultrà.—*Pers.* S[illegible]5.

every day a beginning of death, and the night composing us to sleep, bids us go to our lesser rest; because that night, which is the end of the preceding day, is but a lesser death; and whereas now we have died so many days, the last day of our life is but the dying so many more, and when that last day of dying will come, we know not. There is nothing then added but the circumstance of sickness, which also happens many times before; only men are pleased to call that death which is the end of dying, when we cease to die any more: and, therefore, to put off our preparation till that which we call death, is to put off the work of all our life, till the time comes in which it is to cease and determine.

3. But to accelerate our early endeavour, (besides what hath been formerly considered upon the proper grounds of repentance,) I here re-enforce the consideration of death in such circumstances which are apt to engage us upon an early industry. 1. I consider, that no man is sure that he shall not die suddenly[e]; and therefore, if heaven be worth securing, it were fit that we should reckon every day the vespers of death, and therefore that, according to the usual rites of religion, it be begun and spent with religious offices: and let us consider, that those many persons who are remarked in history to have died suddenly, either were happy by an early piety, or miserable by a sudden death. And if uncertainty of condition be an abatement of felicity, and spoils the good we possess, no man can be happy but he that hath lived well, that is, who hath secured his condition by an habitual and living piety. For since God hath not told us we shall not die suddenly, is it not certain he intended we should prepare for sudden death, as well as against death clothed in any other circumstances? Fabius, surnamed Pictor[f], was choked with a hair in a mess of milk, Anacreon with a raisin, Cardinal Colonna with figs crusted with ice,

[e] Quid quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis
Cautum est in horas. Navita Bosporum
Pœnus perhorrescit, neque ultrà
Cæca timet aliunde fata:
Miles sagittas et celerem fugam
Parthi; catenas Parthus et Italum
Robur. Sed improvisa lethi
Vis rapuit, rapietque gentes.—*Hor.* lib. ii. *Od.* 13.

[f] [illegible]o in Brut.

Adrian the Fourth with a fly, Drusus Pompeius with a pear, Domitius Afer, Quintilian's tutor, with a full cup, Casimire the Second, king of Polonia[g], with a little draught of wine, Amurath with a full goblet, Tarquinius Priscus with a fish-bone. For as soon as a man is born, that which in nature only remains to him, is to die[h]; and if we differ in the way or time of our abode, or the manner of our exit, yet we are even at last: and since it is not determined by a natural cause which way we shall go, or at what age, a wise man will suppose himself always upon his death-bed; and such supposition is like making of his will, he is not the nearer death for doing it, but he is the readier for it when it comes.

4. St. Jerome said well, "He deserves not the name of a Christian, who will live in that state of life in which he will not die." And indeed it is a great venture to be in an evil state of life, because every minute of it hath a danger; and therefore a succession of actions, in every one of which he may as well perish as escape, is a boldness that hath no mixture of wisdom or probable venture. How many persons have died in the midst of an act of sport, or at a merry meeting! Grimoaldus, a Lombard king, died with shooting of a pigeon; Thales, the Milesian, in the theatre; Lucia, the sister of Aurelius the emperor, playing with her little son, was wounded in her breast with a needle, and died; Benno, bishop of Adelburg, with great ceremony and joy consecrating St. Michael's church, was crowded to death by the people; so was the duke of Saxony, at the inauguration of Albert the First[i]. The great lawyer, Baldus, playing with a little dog, was bitten upon the lip, instantly grew mad, and perished; Charles the Eighth of France, seeing certain gentle-

[g] Mart. Crom. lib. vi. Volaterran. lib. iv. c. 22.

[h] Cui nasci contigit, mori restat; intervallis distinguimur, exitu æquamur. — *Quintil.*

Divesne, prisco natus ab Inacho,
Nil interest, an pauper et infima
De gente, sub dio moreris,
Victima nil miserantis Orci.
Omnes eodem cogimur—— *Hor.* lib. ii. *Od.* 3.

Βιότης μὲν γὰρ χρόνος ἐστὶ βραχύς· Κρυφθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ γῆς κεῖται θνητὸς τὸν πάντα χρόνον.

[i] Crantzius, lib. iii. c. 51. Matthiol. in Dioscor.

men playing at tenniscourt, swooned, and recovered not; Henry the Second was killed running at tilt; Ludovicus Borgia with riding the great horse; and the old Syracusan, Archimedes, was slain by a rude soldier as he was making diagrams in the sand, which was his greatest pleasure. How many men have died laughing, or in the ecstasies of a great joy! Philippides the comedian, and Dionysius, the tyrant of Sicily, died with joy at the news of a victory[k]; Diagoras of Rhodes, and Chilo the philosopher, expired in the embraces of their sons crowned with an Olympic laurel[l]; Polycrita Naxia, being saluted the saviouress of her country[m]; Marcus Juventius, when the senate decreed him honours; the emperor Conrad the Second, when he triumphed after the conquest of Italy; had a joy bigger than their heart, and their fancy swelled it, till they burst, and died[n]. Death can enter in at any door: Philistion of Nice died with excessive laughter; so did the poet Philemon, being provoked to it only by seeing an ass eat figs. And the number of persons who have been found suddenly dead in their beds is so great[o], that, as it engages many to a more certain and regular devotion for their compline, so it were well it were pursued to the utmost intention of God; that is, that all the parts of religion should, with zeal and assiduity, be entertained and finished, that, as it becomes wise men, we never be surprised with that we are sure will sometime or other happen. A great general in Italy, at the sudden death of Alfonsus of Ferrara, and Ludovico Corbinelli, at the sight of the sad accident upon Henry the Second of France now mentioned, turned religious, and they did what God intended in those deaths. It concerns us to be curious of single actions, because, even in those shorter periods, we may expire and find our graves. But if the state of life be contradictory to our hopes of heaven, it is like affronting of a cannon before a beleaguered town a month together; it is a contempt of safety, and a rendering all reason useless and unprofitable: but he only is wise, who, having made death familiar to him by expectation and daily apprehension, does at all instants go forth to meet it. The

[k] Plin. lib. vii. c. 53. [l] Cicer. 1. Tusc.
[m] Plut. et Gel. de Illust. Mulier. [n] Cuspin.
[o] Lotus [illegible]biscum est, hilaris cœnavit, et idem inventus manè est mortuus Andragoras. — *Mart.* lib. vi.

wise virgins "went forth to meet the bridegroom," for they "were ready." Excellent, therefore, is the counsel of the son of Sirach: "Use physic or ever thou be sick. Before judgment examine thyself, and in the day of visitation thou shalt find mercy. Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the time of sins show repentance. Let nothing hinder thee to pay thy vows in due time, and defer not until death to be justified[p]."

5. Secondly: I consider, that it often happens, that, in those few days of our last visitation, which many men design for their preparation and repentance, God hath expressed by an exterior accident, that those persons have deceived themselves, and neglected their own salvation. St. Gregory[q] reports of Chrysaurius, a gentleman in the province of Valeria, rich, vicious, and witty, lascivious, covetous, and proud, that, being cast upon his death-bed, he fancied he saw evil spirits coming to arrest him and drag him to hell. He fell into great agony and trouble, shrieked out, called for his son, who was a very religious person, flattered him, as willing to have been rescued by any thing: but perceiving his danger increase, and grown desperate, he called loud with repeated clamours, "Give me respite but till the morrow," and with those words he died, there being "no place left for his repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears" and groans. The same was the case of a drunken monk, whom Venerable Bede mentions[r]. Upon his death-bed he seemed to see hell opened, and a place assigned him near to Caiaphas, and those who crucified our dearest Lord. The religious persons that stood about his bed called on him to repent of his sins, to implore the mercies of God, and to trust in Christ: but he answered, with reason enough, "This is no time to change my life, the sentence is passed upon me, and it is too late." And it is very considerable and sad which Petrus Damianus tells of Gunizo[s], a factious and ambitious person, to whom, it is said, the tempter gave notice of his approaching death: but when any man preached repentance to him, out of a strange incuriousness, or the spirit of reprobation, he seemed like a dead and unconcerned person;

[p] Eccl. xviii. 19, &c.
[q] Homil. xii. in Evang.
[r] Hist. Gent. Anglor. lib. v. c. 15.
[s] Biblioth. Ss. Pp. tom. iii.

in all other discourses he was awake, and apt to answer. For God had shut up the gates of mercy, that no streams should issue forth to quench the flames of hell; or else had shut up the gates of reception and entertainment, that it should not enter: either God denies to give them pardon when they call, or denies to them a power to call; they either cannot pray, or God will not answer. Now, since these stories are related by men, learned, pious, and eminent in their generations, and because they served no design but the ends of piety, and have in them nothing dissonant from revelation or the frequent events of Providence, we may upon their stock consider, that God's judgments and visible marks being set upon a state of life, although they happen but seldom in the instances, yet they are of universal purpose and signification. Upon all murderers God hath not thrown a thunderbolt, nor broken all sacrilegious persons upon the wheel of an inconstant and ebbing estate, nor spoken to every oppressor from heaven in a voice of thunder, nor cut off all rebels in the first attempts of insurrection: but because he hath done so to some, we are to look upon those judgments as Divine accents, and voices of God; threatening all the same crimes with the like events, and with the ruins of eternity. For though God does not always make the same prologues to death, yet by these few accidents happening to single persons, we are to understand his purposes concerning all in the same condition; it was not the person, so much as the estate, which God then remarked with so visible characters of his displeasure.

6. And it seems to me a wonder, that since, from all the records of Scripture[t], urging the uncertainty of the day of death, the horror of the day of judgment, the severity of God, the dissolution of the world, the certainty of our account; still, from all these premises, the Spirit of God makes no other inference, but that we "watch," and "stand in a readiness;" that we "live in all holy conversation and godliness;" and that there is no one word concerning any other manner of an essentially necessary preparation, none but this; yet that there are doctrines commenced, and rules prescribed, and offices set down, and suppletories invented by curates of

[t] Ma[illegible]xv. 13, and xxiv. 42. Mark, xiii. 33. 2 Pet. iii. 10.

souls, how to prepare a vicious person, and, upon his death-bed, to reconcile him to the hopes and promises of heaven. Concerning which, I desire that every person would but inquire[u], where any one promise is recorded in Scripture concerning such addresses, and what articles Christ hath drawn up between his Father and us, concerning a preparation begun upon our death-bed: and if he shall find none, (as, most certainly, from Genesis to the Revelation, there is not a word concerning it, but very much against it,) let him first build his hopes upon this proposition, that "a holy life is the only preparation to a happy death;" and then we can, without danger, proceed to some other considerations.

7. When a good man, or a person concerning whom it is not certain he hath lived in habitual vices, comes to die, there are but two general ways of intercourse with him; the one to keep him from new sins, the other to make some emendations of the old; the one to fortify him against special weaknesses and proper temptations of that estate, and the other to trim his lamp; that by excellent actions he may adorn his spirit, making up the omissions of his life, and supplying the imperfections of his estate; that his soul may return into the hands of its Creator as pure as it can, every degree of perfection being an advantage so great, as that the loss of every the least portion of it cannot be recompensed with all the good of this world. Concerning the first; the temptations proper to this estate are, either weakness in faith, despair, or presumption: for whatsoever is besides these, as it is the common infelicity of all the several states of life, so they are oftentimes arguments of an ill condition, of immortification of vicious habits, and that he comes not to this combat well prepared; such as are, covetousness, unwillingness to make restitution, remanent affections to his former vices, an unresigned spirit, and the like.

8. In the ecclesiastical story, we find many dying persons mentioned, who have been very much afflicted with some doubts concerning an article of faith. St. Gregory[x], in an epistle he wrote to St. Austin, instances, in the temptation

[u] ———— tecum priùs ergò voluta
Hæc animo ante tubas: galeatum serò duelli
Pœnitet ———— *Juvenal. Sat.* 1.

[x] De Præconio S. Hieron.

in all other discourses he was awake, and apt to answer. For God had shut up the gates of mercy, that no streams should issue forth to quench the flames of hell; or else had shut up the gates of reception and entertainment, that it should not enter: either God denies to give them pardon when they call, or denies to them a power to call; they either cannot pray, or God will not answer. Now, since these stories are related by men, learned, pious, and eminent in their generations, and because they served no design but the ends of piety, and have in them nothing dissonant from revelation or the frequent events of Providence, we may upon their stock consider, that God's judgments and visible marks being set upon a state of life, although they happen but seldom in the instances, yet they are of universal purpose and signification. Upon all murderers God hath not thrown a thunderbolt, nor broken all sacrilegious persons upon the wheel of an inconstant and ebbing estate, nor spoken to every oppressor from heaven in a voice of thunder, nor cut off all rebels in the first attempts of insurrection: but because he hath done so to some, we are to look upon those judgments as Divine accents, and voices of God; threatening all the same crimes with the like events, and with the ruins of eternity. For though God does not always make the same prologues to death, yet by these few accidents happening to single persons, we are to understand his purposes concerning all in the same condition; it was not the person, so much as the estate, which God then remarked with so visible characters of his displeasure.

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[t] Matt. xxv. 13, and xxiv. 42. Mark, xiii. 33. 2 Pet. iii. 10.

which Eusebius suffered upon his death-bed. And, although sometimes the devil chooses an article that is not proper to that state, knowing that every such doubt is well enough for his purpose, because of the incapacity of the person to suffer long disputes, and of the jealousy and suspicion of a dying and weak man, fearing lest every thing should cozen him; yet it is commonly instanced in the article of the resurrection, or the state of separation or reunion. And it seems to some persons incredible, that, from a bed of sickness, a state of misery, a cloud of ignorance, a load of passions, a man should enter into the condition of a perfect understanding, great joy, and an intellectual life, a conversation with angels, a fruition of God; the change is greater than his reason; and his faith being, in conclusion, tottering like the ark, and ready to fall, seems a pillar as unsafe and unable to rely on, as a bank of turf in an earthquake. Against this, a general remedy is prescribed by spiritual persons; that the sick man should apprehend all changes of persuasion, which happened to him in his sickness, contradictory to those assents, which in his clearest use of reason he had, to be temptations and arts of the devil. And he hath reason so to think, when he remembers how many comforts of the Spirit of God, what joys of religion, what support, what assistances, what strengths he had, in the whole course of his former life, upon the stock of faith, and interest of the doctrine of Christianity. And since the disbelieving the promises evangelical, at that time, can have no end of advantage, and that all wise men tell him it may have an end to make him lose the title to them, and do him infinite disadvantage[y]; upon the stock of interest and prudence, he must reject such fears, which cannot help him, but may ruin him. For all the works of grace which he did, upon the hopes of God, and the stock of the Divine revelations, (if he fails in his hold upon them,) are all rendered unprofitable. And it is certain, if there be no such thing as

[y] In hunc ferè modum moribundus disseruit Socrates, apud Platonem in Phædone suo: Εἰ μὲν τυγχάνει ἀληθῆ ὄντα ἃ ἐγὼ λέγω, καλῶς δὴ ἔχει τὸ πείσθῆναι· εἰ δὲ μηδὲν ἐστι τελευτήσαντι, ἀλλ' οὖν τοῦτόν γε τὸν χρόνον αὐτὸν πρὸ τοῦ θανάτου ἧττον τοῖς παροῦσιν ἀηδὴς ἔσομαι ὀδυρόμενος. ἡ δὲ ἄγνοιά μοι αὕτη οὐ ξυνδιατελεῖ, (κακὸν γὰρ ἦν) ἀλλ' ὀλίγον ὕστερον ἀπολεῖται. Non abs re ergò erit ut moribundus, si non de articulis fidei disserat et sentiat *de fiducia compertæ veritatis*, at saltem (quod de Socrate dixit Tertullianus) *de industria consultæ æquanimitatis.*

immortality and resurrection, he shall lose nothing for believing there is; but if there be, they are lost to him for not believing it.

9. But this is also to be cured by proper arguments. And there is no Christian man but hath within him, and carries about him, demonstrations of the possibility and great instances of the credibility of those great changes, which these tempted persons have no reason to distrust; but because they think them too great, and too good to be true. And here, not only the consideration of the Divine power, and his eternal goodness, is a proper antidote, but also the observation of what we have already received from God. To be raised from nothing to something, is a mutation not less than infinite; and from that which we were, in our first conception, to pass into so perfect and curious bodies, and to become discursive, sensible, passionate, and reasonable, and next to angels, is a greater change, than from this state to pass into that excellency and perfection of it, which we expect as the melioration and improvement of the present: for this is but a mutation of degrees, that of substance: this is more sensible, because we have perception in both states; that is of greater distance, because in the first term we were so far distant from what we are, that we could not perceive what then we were, much less desire to be what we now perceive: and yet God did that for us, unasked, without any obligation on his part, or merit on ours; much rather, then, may we be confident of this alteration of accidents and degrees, because God hath obliged himself by promise; he hath disposed us to it by qualities, actions, and habits, which are to the state of glory as infancy is to manhood, as elements are to excellent discourses, as blossoms are to ripe fruits. And he that hath wrought miracles for us, preserved us in dangers, done strange acts of Providence, sent his son to take our nature, made a Virgin to bear a son, and God to become man, and two natures to be one individual person, and all in order to this end, of which we doubt, hath given us so many arguments of credibility, that, if he had done any more, it would not have been left in our choice to believe or not believe; and then, much of the excellency of our faith would have been lost. Add to this, that we are not tempted to disbelieve the Roman story, or that Virgil's Æneids were writ

by him, or that we ourselves are descended of such parents; because these things are not only transmitted to us by such testimony, which we have no reason to distrust, but because the tempter cannot serve any end upon us by producing such doubts in us: and, therefore, since we have greater testimony for every article of faith, and to believe it is of so much concernment to us, we may well suspect it to be an artifice of the devil to rob us of our reward; this proceeding of his being of the same nature with all his other temptations, which in our lifetime, like fiery darts, he threw into our face, to despoil us of our glory, and blot out the image of God imprinted on us.

10. Secondly[z]: If the devil tempts the sick person to despair, he who is by God appointed to minister a word of comfort, must fortify his spirit with consideration and representment of the Divine goodness, manifest in all the expresses of nature and grace, of providence and revelation; that God never "extinguishes the smoking flax, nor breaks the bruised reed;" that a constant and a hearty endeavour is the sacrifice which God delights in; that in the firmament of heaven there are little stars, and they are most in number, and there are but few of the greatest magnitude; that there are "children," and "babes in Christ," as well as strong men; and amongst these there are great differences; that the interruptions of the state of grace by intervening crimes, if they were rescinded by repentance, they were great danger in the interval, but served as increment of the Divine glory, and arguments of care and diligence to us at the restitution. These and many more are then to be urged, when the sick person is in danger of being swallowed up with overmuch sorrow: and, therefore, to be insisted on in all like cases, as the physician gives him cordials: that we may do charity to him, and minister comfort, not because they are always necessary, even in the midst of great sadnesses and discomforts. For we are to secure his love to God; that he acknowledge the Divine mercy; that he believe the article of remission of sins; that he be thankful to God for the blessings which already he hath received; and that he lay all the load of his discomfort upon

[z] Θαῤῥεῖν χρὴ, φίλε Βάττε, τάχ' ἄυριον ἔσσετ' ἄμεινον.
Ἐλπίδες ἐν ζωοῖσιν, ἀνέλπιστοι δὲ θανόντες. — *Theocr.*
Ἐν ἐλπίσιν χρὴ τοὺς σοφοὺς ἔχειν βίον·
Ἄνθρωπος ἀτυχῶν σώζεται ὑπ' ἐλπίδος. — *Menand.*

himself, and his own incapacities of mercy: and then the sadness may be very great, and his tears clamorous, and his heart broken all in pieces, and his humility lower than the earth, and his hope indiscernible; and yet no danger to his final condition. Despair reflects upon God, and dishonours the infinity of his mercy. And if the sick person do but confess, that God is not at all wanting in his promises, but ever abounding in his mercies; and that it is want of the condition, on his own part, that makes the misery; and that, if he had done his duty, God would save him; let him be assisted with perpetual prayers, with examples of lapsed and returning sinners, whom the church celebrates for saints, such as Mary Magdalen, Mary of Egypt, Afra, Thasis, Pelagia; let it be often inculcated to him, that as God's mercy is of itself infinite, so its demonstration to us is not determined to any certain period; but hath such latitudes in it, and reservations, which, as they are apt to restrain too great boldness, so also to become sanctuaries to disconsolate persons; let him be invited to throw himself upon God, upon these grounds; that he, who is our Judge, is also our Advocate and Redeemer; that he knows and pities our infirmities, and that our very hoping in him does endear him; and he will deliver us the rather for our confidence, when it is balanced with reverence and humility: and then all these supernumerary fears are advantageous to more necessary graces, and do more secure his final condition than they can disturb it.

11. When St. Arsenius was near his death, he was observed to be very tremulous, sad, weeping and disconsolate. The standers-by asked the reason of his fears; wondering, that he, having lived in great sanctity for many years, should not now rejoice at the going forth of his prison. The good man confessed the fear, and withal said, it was no other than he had always borne about with him in the days of his pilgrimage; and what he then thought a duty, they had no reason now to call either a fault or a misery. Great sorrows, fears, and distrustings of a man's own condition, are oftentimes but abatements of confidence, or a remission of joys and gaieties of spirit; they are but like salutary clouds, dark and fruitful: and if the tempted person be strengthened in a love of God, though he go not farther in his hopes than to believe a possibility of being saved, than to say, "God can

save him, if he please," and to pray that he will save him; his condition is a state of grace; it is like a root in the ground, trod upon, humble and safe, not so fine as the state of flowers; yet that which will spring up in as glorious a resurrection, as that which looks fairer, and pleases the sense, and is indeed a blessing, but not a duty.

12. But there is a state of death-bed, which seems to have in it more question, and to be of nicer consideration; a sick person, after a vicious and base life: and if, upon whatsoever he can do, you give him hopes of a pardon, where is your promise to warrant it? If you do not give him hopes, do you not drive him to despair, and ascertain his ruin, to verify your proposition? To this I answer, that despair is opposed to hope, and hope relies upon the Divine promises; and where there is no promise, there the despair is not a sin, but a mere impossibility. The accursed spirits, which are sealed up to the judgment of the last day, cannot hope; and he that repents not, cannot hope for pardon. And, therefore, if all which the state of death-bed can produce, be not the duty of repentance, which is required of necessity to pardon; it is not in such a person properly to be called despair, any more than it is blindness in a stone, that it cannot see. Such a man is not within the capacities of pardon; and, therefore, all those acts of exterior repentance, and all his sorrow and resolution, and tears of emendation, and other preparatives to interior repentance, are like oil poured into mortal wounds; they are the care of the physician, and these are the cautions of the church, and they are at no hand to be neglected. For if they do not alter the state, they may lessen the judgment, or procure a temporal blessing; and if the person recover, they are excellent beginnings of the state of grace; and if they be pursued in a happy opportunity, will grow up into glory.

13. But if it be demanded, whether in such cases the curate be bound to give absolution; I can give no other answer but this, that if he lie under the censure of the church, the laws of the church are to determine the particular; and I know no church in the world but uses to absolve death-bed penitents, upon the instances of those actions of which their present condition is capable; though in the primitive ages, in some cases, they denied it. But if the sick person be under

no positive censure, and is bound only by the guilt of habitual vice, if he desires the prayers of the church, she is bound in charity to grant them, to pray for pardon to him, and all other graces, in order to salvation: and if she absolves the penitent, towards God it hath no other efficacy but of a solemn prayer; and, therefore, it were better, that all the charity of the office were done, and the solemnity omitted; because, in the earnest prayer, she co-operates to his salvation as much as she can; and, by omitting the solemnity, distinguishes evil livers from holy persons; and walks securely, whilst she refuses to declare him pardoned, whom God hath not declared to be so. And possibly that form of absolution, which the churches of the West now use, being indicative and declaratory of a present pardon, is, for the very form sake, not to be used to death-bed penitents after a vicious life[a]; because if any thing more be intended in the form than a prayer, the truth of the affirmation may be questioned, and an ecclesiastical person hath no authority to say to such a man, "I absolve thee:" but if no more be intended but a prayer, it is better to use a mere prayer and common form of address, than such words, which may countenance insecure confidences, evil purposes, and worse lives.

14. Thirdly: If the devil tempts a sick person, who hath lived well, to presumption, and that he seems full of confidence and without trouble, the care that is then to be taken is, to consider the disease, and to state the question right. For, at some instants and periods, God visits the spirit of a man, and sends the emission of a bright ray into him; and some good men have been so used to apprehensions of the Divine mercy, that they have an habitual cheerfulness of spirit and hopes of salvation. St. Jerome reports, that Hilarion, in a death-bed agony, felt some tremblings of heart; till, reflecting upon his course of life, he found comforts springing from thence by a proper emanation, and departed cheerfully[b]: and Hezekiah represented to God, in prayer, the integrity of his life, and made it the instrument of his

[a] Pœnitentia quæ ab infirmo petitur, infirma est: pœnitentia quæ à moriente tantùm petitur, timeo nè et ipsa moriatur. — *S. Aug. Serm. de Temp. Vide eund.* lib. l. *homil.* 41.

[b] Egredere, anima, quid times? septuaginta propè annis serviisti Christo, et jam mori times? — *S. Hier. in Vita Hilar.*

hope. And nothing of this is to be called presumption, provided it be in persons of eminent sanctity and great experience, old disciples, and the more perfect Christians: but because such persons are but seldom and rare, if the same confidence be observed in persons of common imperfection and an ordinary life, it is to be corrected and allayed with consideration of the Divine severity and justice, and with the strict requisites of a holy life; with the deceit of a man's own heart, with consideration and general remembrances of secret sins: and that the most perfect state of life hath very great needs of mercy[c]; and "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" And the spirit of the man is to be promoted, and helped in the increase of contrition; as being the proper deletery to cure the extravagancies of a forward and intemperate spirit.

15. But there is a presumption commenced upon opinion, relying either upon a persuasion of single predestination, or else (which is worse,) upon imaginary securities; that heaven is to be purchased upon conditions easier than a day's labour; and that an evil life may be reconciled to heaven, by the intervening of little or single acts of piety or repentance. If either of them both have actually produced ill life, to which they are apt, or apt to be abused, the persons are miserable in their condition, and cannot be absolutely remedied by going about to cure the presumption; that was the cause of all, but now it is the least thing to be considered: his whole state is corrupted, and men will not, by any discourses or spiritual arts used on their death-beds, be put into a state of grace; because then is no time to change the state, and there is no mutation then but by single actions; from good to better, a dying man may proceed, but not from the state of reprobation to the life of grace. And yet it is good charity to unloose the bonds of Satan, whereby the man is bound and led captive at his will; to take off the presumption, by destroying the cause; and then let the work of grace be set as forward as it can, and leave the event to God; for nothing else is left possible to be done. But if the sick man be of a good life, and yet have a degree of confidence beyond his

[c] Væ vitæ etiam laudabili, si sine misericordia discutias eam. — *S. Aug.* lib. ix. *Confess.*

virtue, upon the fancy of predestination, it is not then a time to rescind his opinion by a direct opposition, but let him be drawn off from the consideration of it by such discourses as are apt to make him humble and penitent; for they are the most apt instruments to secure the condition of the man, and attemper his spirit. These are the great temptations incident to the last scene of our lives; and are, therefore, more particularly suggested by the tempter, because they have in them something contrary to the universal effect of a holy life, and are designs to interpose between the end of the journey and the reception of the crown: and, therefore, it concerns every man, who is in a capacity of "receiving the end of his faith, the salvation of his soul," to lay up, in the course of his life, something against this great day of expense; that he may be better fortified with the armour of the Spirit against these last assaults of the devil, that he may not shipwreck in the haven.

16. "Eschewing evil" is but the one half of our work; we must also "do good." And now, in the few remanent days or hours of our life, there are certain exercises of religion which have a special relation to this state, and are, therefore, of great concernment to be done; that we may make our condition as certain as we can, and our portion of glory greater, and our pardon surer, and our love to increase; and that our former omissions and breaches be repaired, with a condition in some measure proportionable to those great hopes, which we then are going to possess. And, first, let the sick person, in the beginning of his sickness, and in every change and great accident of it, make acts of resignation to God, and entirely submit himself to the Divine will; remembering, that sickness may, to men properly disposed, do the work of God, and produce the effect of the Spirit, and promote the interest of his soul, as well as health, and oftentimes better; as being in itself, and by the grace of God, apt to make us confess our own impotency and dependencies, and to understand our needs of mercy, and the continual influences and supports of heaven; to withdraw our appetites from things below, to correct the vanities and insolencies of an impertinent spirit, to abate the extravagancies of the flesh, to put our carnal lusts into fetters and disability; to remember us of our state of pilgrimage, that this is our way, and our

stage of trouble and banishment, and that heaven is our country: for so sickness is the trial of our patience, a fire to purge us, and instructor to teach us, a bridle to restrain us, and a state inferring great necessities of union and adhesions unto God. And as, upon these grounds, we have the same reason to accept sickness at the hands of God, as to receive physic from a physician; so it is argument of excellent grace to give God hearty thanks in our disease, and to accept it cheerfully, and with spiritual joy.

17. Some persons create to themselves excuses of discontent, and quarrel, not with the pain, but the ill consequence of sickness. It makes them troublesome to their friends; and consider not that their friends are bound to accept the trouble, as themselves to accept the sickness; that to tend the sick is, at that time, allotted for the portion of their work, and that charity receives it as a duty, and makes that duty to be a pleasure. And however, if our friends account us a burden, let us also accept that circumstance of affliction to ourselves, with the same resignation and indifference as we entertain its occasion, the sickness itself; and pray to God to enkindle a flame of charity in their breasts, and to make them compensation for the charge and trouble we put them to; and then the care is at an end. But others excuse their discontent with a more religious colour, and call the disease their trouble and affliction, because it impedes their other parts of duty; they cannot preach, or study, or do exterior assistances of charity and alms, or acts of repentance and mortification. But it were well if we could let God proportion out our work, and set our task; let him choose what virtues we shall specially exercise: and when the will of God determines us, it is more excellent to endure afflictions with patience, equanimity, and thankfulness, than to do actions of the most pompous religion, and laborious or expensive charity; not only because there is a deliciousness in actions of religion and choice, which is more agreeable to our spirit than the toleration of sickness can be, which hath great reward, but no present pleasure; but also because our suffering and our employment is consecrated to us when God chooses it, and there is then no mixture of imperfection or secular interest, as there may be in other actions even of an excellent religion, when ourselves are the

choosers. And let us also remember, that God hath not so much need of thy works, as thou hast of patience, humility, and resignation. St. Paul was far a more considerable person than thou canst be, and yet it pleased God to shut him in prison for two years, and, in that interval, God secured and promoted the work of the Gospel: and although Epaphroditus was an excellent minister, yet God laid a sickness upon him, and, even in his disease, gave him work enough to do, though not of his own choosing. And, therefore, fear it not but the ends of religion or duty will well enough proceed without thy help; and thy own eternal interest, when God so pleases, shall better be served by sickness, and the virtues which it occasions, than by the opportunities of health, and an ambulatory active charity.

18. When thou art resigned to God, use fair and appointed means for thy recovery; trust not in thy spirit upon any instrument of health; as thou art willing to be disposed by God, so look not for any event upon the stock of any other cause or principle; be ruled by the physician and the people appointed to tend thee, that thou neither become troublesome to them, nor give any sign of impatience or a peevish spirit. But this advice only means, that thou do not disobey them out of any evil principle; and yet if reason be thy guide, to choose any other aid, or follow any other counsel, use it temperately, prudently, and charitably. It is not intended for a duty, that thou shouldst drink oil instead of wine, if thy minister reach it to thee, as did St. Bernard; nor that thou shouldst accept a cake tempered with linseed oil instead of oil of olives, as did F. Stephen, mentioned by Ruffinus: but that thou tolerate the defects of thy servants, and accept the evil accidents of thy disease, or the unsuccessfulness of thy physician's care, as descending on thee from the hands of God. Asa was noted in Scripture, that, "in his sickness, he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians[d]." Louis XI. of France was then the miserablest person in his kingdom, when he made himself their servant, courting them with great pensions and rewards, attending to their rules as oracles, and from their mouths waited for the sentence of life or death. We are, in these

[d] 2 Chron. xvi. 12.

great accidents, especially to look upon God as the disposer of the events, which he very often disposes contrary to the expectation we may have of probable causes; and sometimes without physic we recover, and with physic and excellent applications we grow worse and worse; and God it is that makes the remedies unprosperous. In all these, and all other accidents, if we take care that the sickness of the body derive not itself into the soul, nor the pains of one procure impatience of the other, we shall alleviate the burden, and make it supportable and profitable. And certain it is, if men knew well to bear their sicknesses, humbly towards God, charitably towards our ministers, and cheerfully in themselves, there were no greater advantage in the world to be received, than upon a sick bed; and that alone hath in it the benefits of a church, of a religious assembly, of the works of charity and labour. And since our soul's eternal well-being depends upon the charities, and providence, and veracity of God, and we have nothing to show for it but his word and goodness, and that is infinitely enough; it is but reason we be not more nice and scrupulous about the usage and accommodation of our body: if we accept, at God's hands, sadness and dryness of affection and spiritual desertion [e], patiently and with indifference, it is unhandsome to express ourselves less satisfied in the accidents about our body.

19. But if the sickness proceed to death, it is a new charge upon our spirits, and God calls for a final and entire resignation into his hands. And to a person who was of humble affections, and, in his life-time, of a mortified spirit, accustomed to bear the yoke of the Lord, this is easy, because he looks upon death, not only as the certain condition of nature, but as a necessary transition to a state of blessedness [f], as the determination of his sickness, the period of human infelicities, the last change of condition, the beginning of a new, strange, and excellent life, a security against sin, a freedom from the importunities of a tempter, from the

[e] Νόσους δ' ἀνάγκη τὰς θνητὰτους φέρειν. — *Sophocl. Phædr.*

[f] Νομίζειν μὲν γὰρ δὴ τὸν εὐδάδε βίον ὡς ἂν ἀκμὴν νυομένων εἶναι· τὸν δὲ θάνατον γένεσιν εἰς τὸν ὄντως βίον καὶ τὸν εὐδαίμονα τοῖς φιλοσοφησάσι. — *Strabo*, lib. xv.

Peto, nate, suspice cœlum; non enim tibi vita eripitur, sed mutatur in melius, dixit mater Symphoriani apud Ambros. in Vita Symphor. Serm. in c. 7. Jobi.

tyranny of an imperious lust, from the rebellion of concupiscence, from the disturbances and tempests of the irascible faculty, and from the fondness and childishness of the concupiscible; and St. Ambrose says well, "the trouble of this life and the dangers are so many, that, in respect of them, death is a remedy," and a fair proper object of desires[g]. And we find that many saints have prayed for death, that they might not see the persecutions and great miseries incumbent upon the church: and if the desire be not out of impatience, but of charity, and with resignation, there is no reason to reprove it. Elias prayed that God would "take his life[h]," that he might not see the evils of Ahab and Jezebel, and their vexatious intendments against the prophets of the Lord. And St. Austin[i], upon the incursion of the Vandals into Africa, called his clergy together, and, at their chapter, told them, "he had prayed to God either to deliver his people from the present calamity, or grant them patience to bear it, or that he would take him out of the world, that he might not see the miseries of his diocese;" adding, "that God had granted him the last:" and he presently fell sick, and died in the siege of his own Hippo. And if death, in many cases, be desirable, and for many reasons, it is always to be submitted to, when God calls. And as it is always a misery to fear death[k], so it is very often a sin, or the effect of sin. If our love to the world hath fastened our affections here, it is a direct sin: and this is, by the son of Sirach, noted to be the case of rich and great personages: "How bitter, O death, is thy remembrance to a man that is at rest in his possessions[l]!" But if it be a fear to perish in the ruins of eternity, they are not to blame for fearing, but that their own ill lives have procured the fear. And yet there are persons in the state of grace, but because they are in great imperfection, have such lawful fears of death, and of entering

[g] Hoc homo morte lucratur, nè malum immortale esset. — *Naz.*
—— Κρεῖσσον γὰρ εἰς ἅπαξ θανεῖν,
Ἢ τὰς ἁπασας ἡμέρας πάσχειν κακῶς. — *Æschyl. Prometh.*

[h] 1 Kings, xix. 4. [i] In Vita S. Aug. c. 16.

[k] Fortem posce animum mortis terrore carentem,
Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat
Naturæ, qui ferre queat quoscunque labores,
Nesciat irasci, cupiat nihil —— —— *Juven.*

[l] Ecclus. xli. 1.

upon an uncertain sentence, which must stand eternally irreversible, be it good or bad, that they may, with piety and care enough, pray David's prayer, " O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen." But in this, and in all other cases, death must be accepted without murmur, though without fear it cannot. A man may pray to be delivered from it; and yet, if God will not grant it, he must not go as one haled to execution: but if, with all his imperfect fears, he shall throw himself upon God, and accept his sentence as righteous, whether it speak life or death, it is an act of so great excellency, that it may equal the good actions of many succeeding and surviving days; and, peradventure, a longer life will be yet more imperfect, and that God, therefore, puts a period to it, that thou mayest be taken into a condition more certain, though less eminent. However, let not the fears of nature, or the fear of reason, or the fears of humility, become accidentally criminal, by a murmur or a pertinacious contesting against the event, which we cannot hinder, but ought to accept by an election secondary, rational, and pious, and upon supposition that God will not alter the sentence passed upon thy temporal life; always remembering, that, in Christian philosophy, death hath in it an excellency of which the angels are not capable. For, by the necessity of our nature, we are made capable of dying for the holy Jesus: and next to the privilege of that act, is our willingness to die at his command, which turns necessity into virtue, and nature into grace, and grace to glory.

20. When the sick person is thus disposed, let him begin to trim his wedding garment, and dress his lamp with the repetition of acts of repentance, perpetually praying to God for pardon of his sins, representing to himself the horror of them, the multitude, the obliquity, being helped by arguments apt to excite contrition, by repetition of penitential psalms and holy prayers; and he may, by accepting and humbly receiving his sickness at God's hand, transmit it into the condition of an act or effect of repentance, acknowledging himself by sin to have deserved and procured it, and praying that the punishment of his crimes may be here, and not reserved for the state of separation, and for ever.

21. But above all single acts of this exercise, we are

concerned to see that nothing of other men's goods stick to us, but let us shake it off as we would a burning coal from our flesh; for it will destroy us, it will carry a curse with us, and leave a curse behind us[m]. Those who, by thy means or importunity, have become vicious, exhort to repentance and holy life; those whom thou hast cozened into crimes, restore to a right understanding; those who are, by violence and interest, led captive by thee to any indecency, restore to their liberty, and encourage to the prosecution of holiness; discover and confess thy fraud and unlawful arts, cease thy violence, and give as many advantages to virtue as thou hast done to viciousness. Make recompense for bodily wrongs, such as are wounds, dismemberings, and other disabilities: restore every man, as much as thou canst, to that good condition from which thou hast removed him; restore his fame, give back his goods, return the pawn, release forfeitures, and take off all unjust invasions or surprises of his estate, pay debts, satisfy for thy fraud and injustice as far as thou canst, and as thou canst, and as soon; or this alone is weight enough, no less than a mill-stone about thy neck. But if the dying man be of God, and in the state of grace, that is, if he have lived a holy life, repented seasonably, and have led a just, sober, and religious conversation in any acceptable degree, it is to be supposed he hath no great account to make for unpretended injuries, and unjust detentions: for if he had detained the goods of his neighbour fraudulently or violently, without amends, when it is in his power and opportunity to restore, he is not the man we suppose him in this present question: and although, in all cases, he is bound to restore according to his ability, yet the act is less excellent when it is compelled, and so it seems to be, if he have continued the injustice till he is forced to quit the purchase. However, if it be not done till then, let it be provided for then. And that I press this duty to pious persons at this time, is only to oblige them to a diligent scrutiny concerning the lesser omissions of this duty in the matter of fame, or lesser debts, or spiritual restitution; or that those unevennesses of account, which were but of late

[m] Deteriores sunt qui vitam moresque bonorum corrumpunt, his qui substantias et prædia diripiunt. — *S. Gregor.*

transaction, may now be regulated; and that whatsoever is undone in this matter, from what principle soever it proceeds, whether of sin or only of forgetfulness, or of imperfection, may now be made as exact as we can, and are obliged; and that those excuses, which made it reasonable and lawful to defer restitution, as want of opportunity, clearness of ability, and accidental inconvenience, be now laid aside, and the action be done or provided for, in the midst of all objections and inconvenient circumstances, rather than to omit it, and hazard to perform it.

22. Hither, also, I reckon resolutions and forward purposes of emendation and greater severity, in case God return to us hopes of life; which, therefore, must be reinforced, that we may serve the ends of God, and understand all his purposes, and make use of every opportunity; every sickness laid upon us being with a design of drawing us nearer to God; and even holy purposes are good actions of the Spirit, and principles of religion: and though alone they cannot do the work of grace, or change the state, when they are ineffectual, that is, when either we will not bring them into act, or that God will not let us; yet, to a man already in the state of grace, they are the additions of something good, and are like blowing of coals, which, although it can put no life into a dead coal, yet it makes a live coal shine brighter, and burn clearer, and adds to it some accidental degrees of heat.

23. Having thus disposed himself to the peace of God, let him make peace with all those, in whom he knows, or suspects, any minutes of anger, or malice, or displeasure towards him, submitting himself to them with humility, whom he unworthily hath displeased[n], asking pardon of them who say they are displeased, and offering pardon to them that have displeased him; and then let him crave the peace of holy church. For it is all this while to be supposed, that he hath used the assistance and prayers, the counsel and the advices, of a spiritual man, and that, to this purpose, he hath opened to him the state of his whole life, and made him to understand what emendations of his faults he hath made, what acts of repentance he hath done, how lived after his

[n] Πρὸς τὸν τελευτήσαντ' ἕκαστος, κἂν σφόδρα
Ἂν ἐχθρὸς ᾖ τις, γίνεται φίλος τότε.

fall and reparation, and that he hath submitted all that he did, or undid, to the discerning of a holy man, whose office it is to guide his soul in this agony and last offices. All men cannot have the blessing of a wise and learned minister, and some die where they can have none at all: yet it were a safer course to do as much of this as we can, and to a competent person, if we can; if we cannot, then to the best we have, according as we judge it to be of spiritual advantage to us: for, in this conjuncture of accidents, it concerns us to be sure, if we may, and not to be deceived, where we can avoid it; because we shall never return to life, to do this work again. And if, after this intercourse with a spiritual guide, we be reconciled by the solemn prayer of the church, the prayer of absolution, it will be of great advantage to us; we depart with our Father's blessing, we die in the actual communion of the church, we hear the sentence of God applied after the manner of men, and the promise of pardon made circumstantiate, material, present, and operative upon our spirits, and have our portion of the promise, which is recorded by St. James, that "if the elders of the church pray over a sick person" fervently and "effectually," (add solemnly,) "his sins shall be forgiven him," (that is, supposing him to be in a capacity to receive it,) because such prayers, of such a man, are very prevalent[o].

24. All this is, in a spiritual sense, "washing the hands in innocency," and then let him "go to the altar:" let him not, for any excuse less than impossibility, omit to receive the holy sacrament; which the fathers, assembled in the great Nicene council, have taught all the Christian world to call, "the most necessary provisions for our last journey[p];" which is the memory of that death by which we hope for life; which is the seed of immortality and resurrection of our bodies; which unites our spirit to Christ; which is a great defensative against the hostilities of the devil; which is the most solemn prayer of the church, united and made acceptable by the sacrifice of Christ, which is then represented and exhibited to God; which is the great instrument of spiritual

[o] Jam. vi. 14, 15.

[p] Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἐξοδευόντων ὁ παλαιὸς καὶ κανονικὸς νόμος φυλαχθήσεται καὶ νῦν· ὥστε εἴ τις ἐξοδεύει, τοῦ τελευταίου καὶ ἀναγκαιοτάτου ἐφοδίου μὴ ἀποστερεῖσθαι. — *Conc. Nicen.* can. 13.

increase, and the growth of grace; which is duty and reward, food and physic, health and pleasure, deletery and cordial, prayer and thanksgiving, an union of mysteries, the marriage of the soul, and the perfection of all the rites of Christianity: dying with the holy sacrament in us, is a going to God with Christ in our arms, and interposing him between us and his angry sentence. But then we must be sure that we have done all the duty, without which we cannot communicate worthily. For else Satan comes in the place of Christ, and it is a horror not less than infinite, to appear before God's tribunal possessed, in our souls, with the spirit of darkness. True it is, that, by many laws of the church[q], the bishop and the minister are bound to give the holy eucharist to every person, who, in the article or apparent danger of death, desires it, provided that he hath submitted himself to the imposition and counsels of the bishop or guide of his soul, that, in case he recovers, he may be brought to the peace of God and his church, by such steps and degrees of repentance, by which other public sinners are reconciled. But to this gentleness of discipline, and easiness of administration, those excellent persons who made the canons thought themselves compelled, by the rigour of the Novatians; and because they admitted not lapsed persons to the peace of the church upon any terms, though never so great, so public, or so penal a repentance; therefore, these not only remitted them to the exercise and station of penitents, but also to the communion. But the fathers of the council of Eliberis denied this favour to persons, who, after baptism, were idolaters[r]; either intending this as a great argument to affright persons from so great a crime, or else believing that it was unpardonable after baptism, a contradiction to that state which we entered into by baptism, and the covenant evangelical. However, I desire all learned persons to observe it, and the less learned also to make use of it, that those more ancient councils of the church[s], which commanded the holy communion to be

[q] Concil. Nicen. can. eod. Con. Ancyr. c. 6. Conc. Aurelian. ii. c. 12.

[r] Conc. Elib. c. 1.

[s] Μετὰ δοκιμασίας ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐπιδότω. — *Concil. Nicen.* c. 13.

Τούτους ἐπὶ ὅρῳ δεχθῆναι. — *Conc. Anc.* c. 9.

De his qui in pœnitentia positi vitâ excesserunt, placuit nullum communione vacuum debere dimitti. — *Conc. Aurel.* ii. n. 12.

given to dying persons, meant only such, which, according to the custom of the church, were under the conditions of repentance, that is, such to whom punishment and discipline of divers years were enjoined; and if it happened they died in the interval, before the expiration of their time of reconciliation, then they admitted them to the communion. Which describes to us the doctrine of those ages, when religion was purer, and discipline more severe, and holy life secured by rules of excellent government; that those only were fit to come to that feast, who, before their last sickness, had finished the repentance of many years, or, at least, had undertaken it[t]. I cannot say it was so always, and in all churches; for as the disciples grew slack, or men's persuasions had variety, so they were more ready to grant repentance, as well as absolution, to dying persons: but it was otherwise in the best times, and with severer prelates. And certainly it were great charity to deny the communion to persons, who have lived viciously till their death; provided it be by competent authority, and done sincerely, prudently, and without temporal interest: to other persons, who have lived good lives, or repented of their bad, though less perfectly, it ought not to be denied, and they less ought to neglect it.

25. But as every man must put himself, so also he must put his house in order, make his will, if he have an estate to dispose of; and in that he must be careful to do justice to every man, and charity to the poor, according as God hath enabled him: and though charity is then very late, if it begins not earlier; yet, if this be but an act of an ancient habit, it is still more perfect, as it succeeds in time, and superadds to the former stock. And, among other acts of duty, let it be remembered, that it is excellent charity to leave our will and desires clear, plain, and determinate, that contention and lawsuits may be prevented, by the explicate declaration of the legacies. At last, and in all instances and periods of our following days, let the former good acts be renewed; let God be praised for all his graces and blessings of our life, let him be entreated for pardon of our sins, let acts of love and contrition, of hope, of joy, of humility, be

[t] Vide Concil. Eliber. c. 46, et c. 69.

the work of every day which God still permits us, always remembering to ask remission for those sins we remember not. And if the condition of our sickness permits it, let our last breath expire with an act of love; that it may begin the charities of eternity[u], and, like a taper burnt to its lowest base, it may go out with a great emission of light, leaving a sweet smell behind us, to perfume our coffin; and that these lights, newly made brighter, or trimmed up, in our sickness, may shine about our hearse, that they may become arguments of a pious sadness to our friends, (as the charitable coats, which Dorcas made, were to the widows,) and exemplar to all those who observed, or shall hear of, our holy life and religious death. But if it shall happen that the disease be productive of evil accidents, as a disturbed fancy, a weakened understanding, wild discoursings, or any deprivation of the use of reason, it concerns the sick persons, in the happy intervals of a quiet, untroubled spirit, to pray earnestly to God, that nothing may pass from him, in the rages of a fever, or worse distemper, which may less become his duty, or give scandal, or cause trouble to the persons in attendance: and if he shall also renounce and disclaim all such evil words which his disease may speak, not himself, he shall do the duty of a Christian and a prudent person. And after these preparatives, he may, with piety and confidence, resign his soul into the hands of God, to be deposited in holy receptacles till "the day of restitution of all things;" and in the mean time, with a quiet spirit, descend into that state which is the lot of Cæsars, and where all kings and conquerors have laid aside their glories.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and holy Jesus, who, by death, hast overcome death, and by thy passion hast taken out its sting, and made it to become one of the gates of heaven, and an entrance to felicity; have mercy upon me now, and at the hour of my death: let thy grace accompany me all the days

[u] ——— Ut se vixisse beatum
Dicat, et exacto contentus tempore vitæ
Cedat uti conviva satur ———
Hor. Serm. 1.

of my life, that I may, by a holy conversation, and an habitual performance of my duty, wait for the coming of our Lord, and be ready to enter with thee at whatsoever hour thou shalt come. Lord, let not my death be in any sense unprovided, nor untimely, nor hasty, but after the common manner of men, having in it nothing extraordinary, but an extraordinary piety, and the manifestation of a great and miraculous mercy. Let my senses and understanding be preserved entire till the last of my days, and grant that I may die the death of the righteous, having first discharged all my obligations of justice, leaving none miserable and unprovided in my departure; but be thou the portion of all my friends and relatives, and let thy blessing descend upon their heads, and abide there, till they shall meet me in the bosom of our Lord. Preserve me ever in the communion and peace of the church; and bless my death-bed with the opportunity of a holy and a spiritual guide, with the assistance and guard of angels, with the perception of the holy sacrament, with patience and dereliction of my own desires, with a strong faith, and a firm and humble hope, with just measures of repentance, and great treasures of charity to thee, my God, and to all the world; that my soul, in the arms of the holy Jesus, may be deposited with safety and joy, there to expect the revelation of thy day, and then to partake the glories of thy kingdom, O eternal and holy Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Crucifixion of the Holy Jesus.

1. WHEN the sentence of death pronounced against the Lord was to be put in execution, the soldiers pulled off the robe of mockery, the scarlet mantle, which in jest they put upon him, and put on his own garments. But, as Origen observes, the evangelist mentioned not that they took off the crown of thorns; what might serve their interest they pursue, but nothing of remission or mercy to the afflicted Son of man: but so it became the King of sufferings, not to lay aside his imperial thorns, till they were changed into

diadems of glory. But now Abel is led forth by his brother to be slain: a gay spectacle to satisfy impious eyes, who would not stay behind, but attended and waited upon the hangman to see the catastrophe of this bloody tragedy[a]. But when Piety looks on, she beholds a glorious mystery. Sin laughed to see the King of heaven and earth, and the great lover of souls, instead of the sceptre of his kingdom, to bear a tree of cursing and shame. But Piety wept tears of pity, and knew they would melt into joy, when she should behold that cross, which loaded the shoulders of her Lord, afterward sit upon the sceptres, and be engraved and signed upon the foreheads of kings.

2. It cannot be thought but the ministers of Jewish malice used all the circumstances of affliction, which, in any case, were accustomed towards malefactors and persons to be crucified, and therefore it was that in some old figures we see our blessed Lord described with a table appendent to the fringe of his garment, set full of nails and pointed iron[b]; for so sometimes they afflicted persons condemned to that kind of death: and St. Cyprian affirms[c], that Christ did stick to the wood that he carried, being galled with the iron at his heels, and nailed even before his crucifixion. But this, and the other accidents of his journey, and their malice, so crushed his wounded, tender, and virginal body, that they were forced to lay the load upon a Cyrenian, fearing that he should die with less shame and smart than they intended him. But so he was pleased to take man unto his aid, not only to represent his own need, and the dolorousness of his passion, but to consign the duty unto man, that we must enter into a fellowship of Christ's sufferings, taking up the cross of martyrdom when God requires us, enduring affronts, being patient under affliction, loving them that hate us, and being benefactors to our enemies, abstaining from sensual and intemperate delight, forbidding to ourselves lawful festivities and recreations of our weariness, when we have an end of the spirit to serve upon the ruins of the body's strength,

[a] S. Aug. Tract. 119. in Joan.

[b] O Carnificinum cribrum quod credo fore,
Ità te forabunt patibulatum per vias
Stimulis, si noster huc revenerit senex.—*Plaut. in Mostel.*

[c] Tu ipse patibuli tui bajulus hærebas ligno quod toleras, evectionis et passionis anxietates sustinens et labores.—*S. Cypr. de Pass.*

mortifying our desires, breaking our own will, not seeking ourselves, being entirely resigned to God. These are the cross, and the nails, and the spear, and the whip, and all the instruments of a Christian's passion. And we may consider, that every man in this world shall, in some sense or other, bear a cross: few men escape it, and it is not well with them that do: but they only bear it well that follow Christ, and tread in his steps, and bear it for his sake, and walk as he walked; and he that follows his own desires, when he meets with a cross there, (as it is certain enough he will,) bears the cross of his concupiscence, and that hath no fellowship with the cross of Christ. By the precept of "bearing the cross," we are not tied to pull evil upon ourselves, that we may imitate our Lord in nothing but in being afflicted; or to personate the punitive exercises of mortification and severe abstinencies, which were eminent in some saints, and to which they had special assistances, as others had the gift of chastity, and for which they had special reason, and, as they apprehended, some great necessities: but it is required that "we bear our own cross;" so said our dearest Lord[d]. For when the cross of Christ is laid upon us, and we are called to martyrdom, then it is our own, because God made it to be our portion: and when, by the necessities of our spirit and the rebellion of our body, we need exterior mortifications and acts of self-denial, then also it is our own cross, because our needs have made it so; and so it is when God sends us sickness, or any other calamity: whatever is either an effect of our ghostly needs, or the condition of our temporal estate, it calls for our sufferance, and patience, and equanimity; for "therefore Christ hath suffered for us," saith St. Peter[e], "leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps," who bore his cross as long as he could; and when he could no longer, he murmured not, but sank under it; and then he was content to receive such aid, not which he chose himself, but such as was assigned him.

3. Jesus was led out of the gates of Jerusalem[f], that he might become the sacrifice for persons without the pale, even for all the world: and the daughters of Jerusalem followed him with pious tears till they came to Calvary, a place

[d] Matt. xvi. 24. [e] 1 Pet. ii. 21. [f] Heb. xiii. 13.

difficult in the ascent, eminent and apt for the publication of shame, a hill of death and dead bones, polluted and impure, and there beheld him stripped naked, who clothes the field with flowers, and all the world with robes, and the whole globe with the canopy of heaven, and so dressed, that now every circumstance was a triumph: by his disgrace he trampled upon our pride; by his poverty and nakedness, he triumphed over our covetousness and love of riches; and, by his pains, chastised the delicacies of our flesh, and broke in pieces the fetters of concupiscence[g]. For as soon as Adam was clothed, he quitted Paradise; and Jesus was made naked, that he might bring us in again. And we also must be despoiled of all our exterior adherencies, that we may pass through the regions of duty and divine love to a society of blessed spirits, and a clarified, immortal, and beatified estate.

4. There they nailed Jesus with four nails[h], fixed his cross in the ground, which, with its fall into the place of its station, gave infinite torture, by so violent a concussion of the body of our Lord, which rested upon nothing but four great wounds; where he was designed to suffer a long and lingering torment. For crucifixion, as it was an excellent pain, sharp and passionate, so it was not of quick effect towards taking away the life. St. Andrew was two whole days upon the cross; and some martyrs have upon the cross been rather starved and devoured with birds, than killed with the proper torment of the tree. But Jesus took all his passion with a voluntary susception, God heightening it to great degrees of torment supernaturally; and he laid down his life voluntarily, when his Father's wrath was totally appeased towards mankind.

5. Some have fancied that Christ was pleased to take something from every condition, of which man ever was, or shall be, possessed; taking immunity from sin from Adam's state of innocence, punishment and misery from the state of Adam fallen, the fulness of grace from the state of renovation, and perfect contemplation of the Divinity and beatific

[g] Athanas. de Pass. et Cruce Domini.

[h] —— κεῖθι φονῆες Εἰς δόρυ τετράσκαλυρον —— *Nonn.*

Albigenses primi pinxerunt imaginem crucifixi uno clavo simul utrumque pedem configente, et Virginem Mariam monoculam; utrumque in derisionem: sed postea prior figura retenta est, et irrepsit in vulgarem famam. — *Lucas Tud.* lib. ii. *contra Albig.*

joys from the state of comprehension and the blessedness of heaven; meaning, that the humanity of our blessed Saviour did, in the sharpest agony of his passion, behold the face of God, and communicate in glory. But I consider, that, although the two natures of Christ were knit by a mysterious union into one person, yet the natures still retain their incommunicable properties. Christ, as God, is not subject to sufferings; as a man, he is the subject of miseries: as God, he is eternal; as man, mortal and commensurable by time: as God, the supreme lawgiver; as man, most humble and obedient to the law: and therefore that the human nature was united to the Divine, it does not infer that it must, in all instances, partake of the Divine felicities, which in God are essential, to man communicated without necessity, and by an arbitrary dispensation. Add to this, that some virtues and excellencies were in the soul of Christ, which could not consist with the state of glorified and beatified persons; such as are humility, poverty of spirit, hope, holy desires; all which, having their seat in the soul, suppose, even in the supremest faculty, a state of pilgrimage, that is, a condition which is imperfect, and in order to something beyond its present. For therefore "Christ ought to suffer," saith our blessed Lord himself[i], and "so enter into his glory." And St. Paul affirms[k], that "we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." And again[l], "Christ humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." Thus his present life was a state of merit and work, and, as a reward of it, he was crowned with glory and immortality, his name was exalted, his kingdom glorified, he was made the Lord of all the creatures, the first-fruits of the resurrection, the exemplar of glory, and the Prince and Head of the Catholic church: and because this was his recompense, and the fruits of his humility and obedience, it is certain it was not a necessary consequence, and a natural efflux, of the personal union of the Godhead with the humanity. This I discourse to this

[i] Luke, xxiv. 26, secundùm vulg. interp.
[k] Hebr. ii. 9.
[l] Philip. ii. 8, 9.

purpose, that we may not in our esteem lessen the suffering of our dearest Lord, by thinking he had the supports of actual glory in the midst of all his sufferings. For there is no one minute, or ray of glory, but its fruition does outweigh and make us insensible of the greatest calamities, and the spirit of pain, which can be extracted from all the infelicities of this world. True it is, that the greatest beauties in this world are receptive of an allay of sorrow, and nothing can have pleasure in all capacities. The most beauteous feathers of the birds of paradise, the ostrich, or the peacock, if put into our throat, are not there so pleasant as to the eye: but the beatific joys of the least glory of heaven take away all pain, "wipe away all tears from our eyes;" and it is not possible, that, at the same instant, the soul of Jesus should be ravished with glory, and yet abated with pains grievous and afflictive. On the other side, some say that the soul of Jesus upon the cross suffered the pains of hell, and all the torments of the damned, and that, without such sufferings, it is not imaginable he should pay the price, which God's wrath should demand of us. But the same that reproves the one, does also reprehend the other; for the hope that was the support of the soul of Jesus, as it confesses an imperfection that is not consistent with the state of glory, so it excludes the despair that is the torment proper to accursed souls. Our dearest Lord suffered the whole condition of humanity, "sin only excepted," and freed us from hell with suffering those sad pains, and merited heaven for his own humanity, as the head, and all faithful people, as the members of his mystical body. And therefore his life here was only a state of pilgrimage, not at all trimmed with beatific glories. Much less was he ever in the state of hell, or upon the cross felt the formal misery and spirit of torment, which is the portion of damned spirits; because it was impossible Christ should despair, and without despair it is impossible there should be a hell. But this is highly probable, that, in the intension of degrees and present anguish, the soul of our Lord might feel a greater load of wrath than is incumbent in every instant upon perishing souls. For all the sadness which may be imagined to be in hell, consists in acts produced from principles, that cannot surpass the force of human or angelical nature; but the pain which our blessed Lord

endured for the expiation of our sins, was an issue of an united and concentred anger, was received into the heart of God and man, and was commensurate to the whole latitude of the grace, patience, and charity of the Word incarnate.

6. And now behold the Priest and the Sacrifice of all the world laid upon the altar of the cross, bleeding, and tortured, and dying, to reconcile his Father to us: and he was arrayed with ornaments more glorious than the robes of Aaron. The crown of thorns was his mitre, the cross his pastoral staff, the nails piercing his hands were instead of rings, the ancient ornament of priests, and his flesh razed and checkered with blue and blood instead of the parti-coloured robe. But as this object calls for our devotion, our love and eucharist to our dearest Lord; so it must needs irreconcile us to sin, which, in the eye of all the world, brought so great shame, and pain, and amazement upon the Son of God, when he only became engaged by a charitable substitution of himself in our place; and therefore we are assured, by the demonstration of sense and experience, it will bring death, and all imaginable miseries, as the just expresses of God's indignation and hatred: for to this we may apply the words of our Lord in the prediction of miseries to Jerusalem, "If this be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" For it is certain, Christ infinitely pleased his Father, even by becoming the person made guilty in estimate of law; and yet so great charity of our Lord, and the so great love and pleasure of his Father, exempted him not from suffering pains intolerable: and much less shall those escape, who provoke and displease God, and "despise so great salvation," which the holy Jesus hath wrought with the expense of blood and so precious a life.

7. But here we see a great representation and testimony of the Divine justice, who was so angry with sin, who had so severely threatened it, who does so essentially hate it, that he would not spare his only Son, when he became a conjunct person, relative to the guilt by undertaking the charges of our nature. For although God hath set down in holy Scripture[m] the order of his justice, and the manner of its manifestation, that one soul shall not perish for the sins of

[m] Deut. xxiv. 16. Ezek. xviii. 2, 3, 4, 5, &c.

another; yet this is meant for justice and for mercy too, that is, he will not curse the son for the father's fault, or, in any relation whatsoever, substitute one person for another to make him involuntarily guilty: but when this shall be desired by a person that cannot finally perish, and does a mercy to the exempt persons, and is a voluntary act of the suscipient, and shall in the event also redound to an infinite good, it is no deflection from the Divine justice to excuse many by the affliction of one, who also for that very suffering shall have infinite compensation. We see that, for the sin of Cham, all his posterity were accursed: the subjects of David died with the plague, because their prince numbered the people: idolatry is punished in the children of the fourth generation: Saul's seven sons were hanged for breaking the league of Gibeon; and Ahab's sin was punished in his posterity, he escaping, and "the evil was brought upon his house in his son's days." In all these cases the evil descended upon persons in near relation to the sinner, and was a punishment to him and a misery to these, and were either chastisements also of their own sins, or, if they were not, they served other ends of Providence, and led the afflicted innocent to a condition of recompense accidentally procured by that infliction. But if for such relation's sake and economical and political conjunction, as between prince and people, the evil may be transmitted from one to another, much rather is it just, when, by contract, a competent and conjunct person undertakes to quit his relative. Thus when the hand steals, the back is whipped; and an evil eye is punished with a hungry belly. Treason causes the whole family to be miserable; and a sacrilegious grandfather hath sent a locust to devour the increase of the nephews.

8. But, in our case, it is a voluntary contract, and therefore no injustice; all parties are voluntary. God is the supreme Lord, and his actions are the measure of justice: we, who had deserved the punishment, had great reason to desire a Redeemer: and yet Christ, who was to pay the ransom, was more desirous of it than we were, for we asked it not before it was promised and undertaken. But thus we see that sureties pay the obligation of the principal debtor, and the pledges of contracts have been, by the best and wisest nations, slain, when the articles have been broken:

the Thessalians slew 250 pledges; the Romans[n] 300 of the Volsci, and threw the Tarentines from the Tarpeian rock. And that it may appear Christ was a person in all senses competent to do this for us, himself testifies[o], that he had "power over his own life, to take it up, or lay it down." And, therefore, as there can be nothing against the most exact justice and reason of laws and punishments; so it magnifies the Divine mercy, who removes the punishment from us, who, of necessity, must have sunk under it, and yet makes us to adore his severity, who would not forgive us without punishing his Son for us; to consign unto us his perfect hatred against sin, to conserve the sacredness of his laws, and to imprint upon us great characters of fear and love. The famous Locrian, Zaleucus, made a law, that all adulterers should lose both their eyes: his son was first unhappily surprised in the crime; and his father, to keep a temper between the piety and soft spirit of a parent, and the justice and severity of a judge, put out one of his own eyes, and one of his son's[p]. So God did with us; he made some abatement, that is, as to the person with whom he was angry, but inflicted his anger upon our Redeemer, whom he essentially loved, to secure the dignity of his sanctions, and the sacredness of obedience; so marrying justice and mercy by the intervening of a commutation. Thus David escaped by the death of his son, God choosing that penalty for the expiation: and Cimon offered himself to prison, to purchase the liberty of his father Miltiades. It was a filial duty in Cimon, and yet the law was satisfied. And both these concurred in our great Redeemer. For God, who was the sole arbitrator, so disposed it, and the eternal Son of God submitted to this way of expiating our crimes, and became an argument of faith and belief of the great article of "remission of sins," and other its appendent causes and effects and adjuncts; it being wrought by a visible and notorious passion. It was made an encouragement of hope; for "he that spared not his own Son" to reconcile us, "will with him

[n] Livius. Vide lib. Si quis rerum, D. De Custod. et Exhib. Reorum. Lib. Si à reo, D. De Fidejussoribus.

[o] John, x. 10.

[p] Apud Diodorum Sicul. et Ælian. Ἵνα μὴ ὁ νεανίσκος τυφλωθῇ τελέως, καὶ ἵνα μὴ διαφθαρῇ τὸ ἅπαξ κεκυρωμένον.

give all things else" to us so reconciled: and a great endearment of our duty and love, as it was a demonstration of his. And, in all the changes and traverses of our life, he is made to us a great example of all excellent actions, and all patient sufferings.

9. In the midst of two thieves, three long hours the holy Jesus hung, clothed with pain, agony, and dishonour, all of them so eminent and vast, that he who could not but hope, whose soul was enchased with divinity, and dwelt in the bosom of God, and in the cabinet of the mysterious Trinity, yet had a cloud of misery so thick and black drawn before him, that he complained as if God had forsaken him: but this was "the pillar of cloud" which conducted Israel into Canaan. And as God behind the cloud supported the holy Jesus, and stood ready to receive him into the union of his glories; so his soul, in that great desertion, had internal comforts proceeding from consideration of all those excellent persons, which should be adopted into the fellowship of his sufferings, which should imitate his graces, which should communicate his glories. And we follow this cloud to our country, having Christ for our guide: and though he trod the way, leaning upon the cross, which, like the staff of Egypt, pierced his hands; yet it is to us a comfort and support, pleasant to our spirits as the sweetest canes, strong as the pillars of the earth, and made apt for our use, by having been borne and made smooth by the hands of our elder brother.

10. In the midst of all his torments, Jesus only made one prayer of sorrow, to represent his sad condition to his Father; but no accent of murmur, no syllable of anger against his enemies: instead of that, he sent up a holy, charitable, and effective prayer for their forgiveness, and by that prayer obtained of God, that within fifty-five days eight thousand of his enemies were converted. So potent is the prayer of charity, that it prevails above the malice of men, turning the arts of Satan into the designs of God; and when malice occasions the prayer, the prayer becomes an antidote to malice. And, by this instance, our blessed Lord consigned that duty to us, which, in his sermons, he had preached, That we should forgive our enemies, and pray for them: and, by so doing, ourselves are freed from the stings of

anger, and the storms of a revengeful spirit; and we oftentimes procure servants to God, friends to ourselves, and heirs to the kingdom of heaven.

11. Of the two thieves that were crucified together with our Lord, the one blasphemed; the other had, at that time, the greatest piety in the world[q], except that of the blessed virgin, and particularly had such a faith, that all the ages of the church could never shew the like. For when he saw Christ "in the same condemnation" with himself, crucified by the Romans, accused and scorned by the Jews, forsaken by his own apostles; a dying distressed man, doing at that time no miracles to attest his divinity or innocence; yet then he confesses him to be a Lord, and a King, and his Saviour: he confessed his own shame and unworthiness; he submitted to the death of the cross: and, by his voluntary acceptation and tacit volition of it, made it equivalent to as great a punishment of his own susception; he showed an incomparable modesty, begging but for a remembrance only; he knew himself so sinful, he durst ask no more; he reproved the other thief for blasphemy; he confessed the world to come, and owned Christ publicly; he prayed to him, he hoped in him, and pitied him; showing an excellent patience, in this sad condition. And in this I consider, that besides the excellency of some of these acts, and the goodness of all, the like occasion for so exemplary faith never can occur; and until all these things shall, in these circumstances, meet in any one man, he must not hope for so safe an exit, after an evil life, upon the confidence of this example. But now Christ had the key of Paradise in his hand; and God blessed the good thief with this opportunity of letting him in, who, at another time, might have waited longer, and been tied to harder conditions. And, indeed, it is very probable, that he was much advantaged by the intervening accident of dying at the same time with Christ; there being a natural compassion produced in us towards the partners of our miseries. For Christ was

[q] *Latro* non semper prædonem aut grassatorem denotat, sed *militem*, qui fortassis ob zelum Judæorum aliquid contra leges Romanas fecerat: alioqui vir fuit non omnino malus.

Titubaverunt qui viderunt Christum mortuos suscitantem; credidit ille qui videbat secum in ligno pendentem. Recolamus fidem latronis, quam non invenit Christus post resurrectionem in discipulis suis. — *S. Aug. Serm.* 144. *de Tempore.*

not void of human passions, though he had in them no imperfection or irregularity; and, therefore, might be invited by the society of misery, the rather to admit him to participate his joys; and St. Paul proves him to be a "merciful high-priest," because "he was touched with a feeling of our infirmities:" the first expression of which was to this blessed thief; Christ and he together sat at the supper of bitter herbs, and Christ paid his symbol, promising that he should "that day be together with him in Paradise."

12. By the cross of Christ stood the holy Virgin-mother, upon whom old Simeon's prophecy was now verified: for now she felt "a sword passing through her very soul:" she stood without clamour and womanish noises[r]; sad, silent, and with a modest grief, deep as the waters of the abyss, but smooth as the face of a pool; full of love, and patience, and sorrow, and hope. Now she was put to it to make use of all those excellent discourses her holy Son had used to build up her spirit, and fortify it against this day. Now she felt the blessings and strengths of faith; and she passed from the griefs of the passion, to the expectation of the resurrection; and she rested in this death, as in a sad remedy; for she knew it reconciled God with all the world. But her hope drew a veil before her sorrow; and though her grief was great enough to swallow her up, yet her love was greater, and did swallow up her grief. But the sun also had a veil upon his face, and taught us to draw a curtain before the passion, which would be the most artificial expression of its greatness; whilst by silence and wonder we confess it great beyond our expression, or, which is all one, great as the burden and baseness of our sins. And with this veil drawn before the face of Jesus, let us suppose him at the gates of Paradise, calling with his last words, in a loud voice, to have them opened, that "the King of glory might come in."

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, who for our sakes didst suffer incomparable anguish and pains, commensurate to thy love, and our miseries, which were infinite; that thou mightest purchase

[r] S. Ambros. in Luc. lib. x.

for us blessings upon earth, and an inheritance in heaven; dispose us by love, thankfulness, humility, and obedience, to receive all the benefit of thy passion; granting unto us and thy whole church, remission of all our sins, integrity of mind, health of body, competent maintenance, peace in our days, a temperate air, fruitfulness of the earth, unity and integrity of faith, extirpation of heresies, reconcilement of schisms, destruction of all wicked counsels intended against us; and bind the hands of rapine and sacrilege, that they may not destroy the vintage, and root up the vine itself. Multiply thy blessings upon us, sweetest Jesus; increase in us true religion, sincere and actual devotion in our prayers, patience in troubles, and whatsoever is necessary to our soul's health, or conducing to thy glory. Amen.

II.

O dearest Saviour, I adore thy mercies and thy incomparable love expressed in thy so voluntary susception and affectionate suffering such horrid and sad tortures, which cannot be remembered without a sad compassion; the waters of bitterness entered into thy soul, and the storms of death, and thy Father's anger, broke thee all in pieces: and what shall I do, who, by my sins, have so tormented my dearest Lord? What contrition can be great enough, what tears sufficiently expressive, what hatred and detestation of my crimes, can be equal and commensurate to those sad accidents which they have produced? Pity me, O Lord; pity me, dearest God; turn those, thy merciful eyes, towards me, O most merciful Redeemer; for my sins are great, like unto thy passion; full of sorrow and shame, and a burden too great for me to bear. Lord, who hast done so much for me, now "only speak the word, and thy servant shall be whole." Let thy wounds heal me, thy virtues amend me, thy death quicken me; that I, in this life, suffering the cross of a sad and salutary repentance, in the union and merits of thy cross and passion, may die with thee, and rest with thee, and rise again with thee, and live with thee for ever, in the possession of thy glories, O dearest Saviour Jesus. Amen.

SECTION XVI.

Of the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.

1. WHILE it was yet "early in the morning, upon the first day of the week, Mary Magdalen, and Mary, the mother of James and Salome, brought sweet spices to the sepulchre," that they might again embalm the holy body; (for the rites of embalming, among the Hebrews, used to last forty days[a],) and their love was not satisfied with what Joseph had done. They, therefore, hastened to the grave; and after they had expended their money, and bought the spices, they begin to consider, "who shall remove the stone:" but yet they still go on, and their love answers the objection, not knowing how it should be done, but yet resolving to go through all the difficulties; but never remember or take care to pass the guards of soldiers. But when they came to the sepulchre, they found the guard affrighted and removed, and "the stone rolled away;" for there had, a little before their arrival, been a great earthquake[b]; and "an angel descending from heaven, rolled away the stone, and sat upon it;" and for fear of him, the guards about the tomb became "astonished with fear," and were "like dead men:" and some of them ran to the high priests, and told them what happened. But they, now resolving to make their iniquity safe and unquestionable, by a new crime, hire the soldiers to tell an incredible and a weak fable, that "his disciples came by night, and stole him away;" against which accident the wit of man could give no more security than themselves had made. The women entered into the sepulchre, and missing the body of Jesus, Mary

[a] Gen. l. Tacit. Annal. lib. xxi.

[b] Aurora lucis rutilat,
Cœlum laudibus intonat,
Mundus exsultans jubilat,
Gemens infernus ululat;
Cùm rex ille fortissimus,
Mortis confractis viribus,
Pede conculcans Tartara,
Solvit à pœna miseros.
Ille qui clausus lapide
Custoditur sub milite,
Triumphans pompâ nobili,
Victor surgit de funere. — *Hymn. Paschal.*

Magdalen ran to the eleven apostles, complaining that the body of our Lord was not to be found. Then Peter and John ran as fast as they could to see: for the unexpectedness of the relation, the wonder of the story, and the sadness of the person, moved some affections in them, which were kindled by the first principles and sparks of faith, but were not made actual and definite, because the faith was not raised to a flame: they looked into the sepulchre, and finding not the body there, they returned. By this time Mary Magdalen was come back; and the women who staid, weeping, for their Lord's body, "saw two angels sitting in white, the one at the head, and the other at the feet:" at which unexpected sight, they "trembled, and bowed themselves:" but an angel bid them "not to fear," telling them, that "Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, was also risen, and was not there:" and called to mind what Jesus had told them in Galilee, concerning his crucifixion, and resurrection the third day.

2. And "Mary Magdalen turned herself back, and saw Jesus; but supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." But "Jesus said unto her, Mary!" Then she knew his voice, and, with ecstasy of joy and wonder, was ready to have crushed his feet with her embraces: but he commanded her "not to touch him," but "go to his brethren, and say, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and your God." Mary departed with satisfaction, beyond the joys of a victory or a full vintage, and told these things to the apostles; but the narration seemed to them as talk of abused and fantastic persons. About the same time, Jesus also appeared unto Simon Peter. Towards the declining of the day, two of his disciples going to Emmaus, sad, and discoursing of the late occurrences, Jesus puts himself into their company, and upbraids their incredulity; and "expounds the Scriptures, that Christ ought to suffer, and rise again the third day," and "in the breaking of bread disappeared;" and so was "known to them" by vanishing away, whom present they knew not. And instantly they hasten to Jerusalem, and told the apostles what had happened.

3. And while they were there, that is, "the same day at evening, when the apostles were assembled," all save Thomas,

" secretly, for fear of the Jews, the doors being shut, Jesus came, and stood in the midst of them. They were exceedingly troubled, supposing it had been a spirit." But Jesus confuted them by the philosophy of their senses, by feeling his flesh and bones, which spirits have not. For he gave them his benediction, " shewing them his hands and his feet." At which sight they rejoiced with exceeding joy, and began to be restored to their indefinite hopes of some future felicity, by the returns of their Lord to life: and there he first " breathed on them, giving them the Holy Ghost," and performing the promise twice made before his death; the promise of the keys, or of " binding and loosing;" saying, " whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained." And that was the second part of clerical power, with which Jesus instructed his disciples, in order to their great commission of preaching and government ecclesiastical. These things were told to Thomas, but he believed not, and resolved against the belief of it, unless he might " put his finger into his hands, and his hand into his side." Jesus, therefore, on the octaves of his resurrection, appeared again to the apostles met together, and makes demonstration to Thomas, in conviction and reproof of his unbelief, promising a special benediction to all succeeding ages of the church; for they are such who " saw not, and yet have believed."

4. But Jesus, at his early appearing, had sent an order by the women, that the disciples should go into Galilee; and they did so after a few days. And Simon Peter being there, went a fishing, and six other of the apostles with him, to the sea of Tiberias, where they " laboured all night, and caught nothing." Towards " the morning, Jesus appeared to them," and bade them " cast the net on the right side of the ship;" which they did, and " enclosed an hundred and fifty-three great fishes:" by which prodigious draught, John, the beloved disciple, perceived " it was the Lord." At which instant, " Peter threw himself into the sea," and went to Jesus; and when the rest were come to shore, they dined with broiled fish. After dinner, Jesus, taking care for those scattered sheep, which were dispersed over the face of the earth, that he might gather them into one sheepfold under one Shepherd, asked Peter, " Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more

than these? Peter answered, Yea, Lord; thou, that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee. Then Jesus said unto him, Feed my lambs." And Jesus asked him the same question, and gave him the same precept the second time, and the third time: for it was a considerable and a weighty employment, upon which Jesus was willing to spend all his endearments and stock of affections that Peter owed him, even upon the care of his little flock. And after the intrusting of this charge to him, he told him, that the reward he should have in this world, should be a sharp and an honourable martyrdom; and, withal, checks at Peter's curiosity, in busying himself about the temporal accidents of other men, and inquiring what should become of John, the beloved disciple. Jesus answered his question with some sharpness of reprehension, and no satisfaction: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Then they fancied that he should not die: but they were mistaken, for the intimation was expounded and verified by St. John's surviving the destruction of Jerusalem; for, after the attempts of persecutors, and the miraculous escape of prepared torments, he died a natural death, in a good old age.

5. After this, Jesus having appointed a solemn meeting for all the brethren that could be collected from the dispersion, and named a certain mountain in Galilee, "appeared to five hundred brethren at once;" and this was his most public and solemn manifestation: and while some doubted, Jesus came according to the designation, and spake to the eleven; sent them to "preach to all the world repentance, and remission of sins in his name;" promising "to be with them to the end of the world." He appeared also unto James, but at what time is uncertain; save that there is something concerning it in the Gospel of St. Matthew, which the Nazarenes of Berea used, and which it is likely themselves added out of report; for there is nothing of it in our Greek copies. The words are these: "When the Lord had given the linen, in which he was wrapped, to the servant of the high priest, he went and appeared unto James. For James had vowed, after he received the Lord's supper, that he would eat no bread till he saw the Lord risen from the grave. Then the Lord called for bread; he blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to James the Just, and said, 'My brother, eat bread, for the Son of

man is risen from the sleep of death.'" So that, by this, it should seem to be done upon the day of the resurrection. But the relation of it by St. Paul, puts it between the appearance which he made to the five hundred, and that last to the apostles, when he was to ascend into heaven. Last of all, when the apostles were "at dinner, he appeared to them, upbraiding their incredulity:" and "then he opened their understanding, that they might discern the sense of Scripture," and again commanded them to preach the Gospel to all the world, giving them power "to do miracles, to cast out devils, to cure diseases;" and instituted the sacrament of baptism, which he commanded should, together with the sermons of the Gospel, be administered "to all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Then he led them into Judea, and they came to Bethany, and from thence to the Mount Olivet; and he commanded them to "stay in Jerusalem," till the Holy Ghost, "the promise of the Father, should descend upon them," which should be accomplished in few days; and then they should know the times, and the seasons, and all things necessary for their ministration and service, and propagation of the Gospel. And while he "discoursed many things concerning the kingdom," behold a cloud came, and parted Jesus from them, and carried him, in their sight, up into heaven; where he sits at the right hand of God, blessed for ever. Amen.

6. While his apostles "stood gazing up to heaven," two angels appeared to them, and told them, that "Jesus should come in like manner as he was taken away," with glory and majesty, and in the clouds, and with the ministry of angels. Amen. "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly."

Ad SECTION XVI.

Considerations upon the Accidents happening in the Interval after the Death of the holy Jesus, until his Resurrection.

1. THE holy Jesus promised to the blessed thief, that he should "that day be with him in Paradise;" which, therefore, was certainly a place or state of blessedness, because it

was a promise; and in the society of Jesus, whose penal and afflictive part of his work of redemption was finished upon the cross. Our blessed Lord did not promise he should that day be with him in his kingdom, for that day it was not opened, and the everlasting doors of those interior recesses were to be shut till after the resurrection, that himself was to ascend thither, and make way for all his servants to enter, in the same method in which he went before us. Our blessed Lord "descended into hell," saith the creed of the apostles[a], from the sermon of St. Peter, as he from the words of David, that is, into the state of separation and common receptacle of spirits, according to the style of Scripture. But the name of "hell" is nowhere in Scripture an appellative of the kingdom of Christ, of the place of final and supreme glory. But concerning the verification of our Lord's promise to the beatified thief, and his own state of separation, we must take what light we can from Scripture, and what we can from the doctrine of the primitive church. St. Paul had two great revelations[b]; he was "rapt up into Paradise," and he was "rapt up into the third heaven:" and these he calls "visions and revelations," not one, but divers: for Paradise is distinguished from the "heaven of the blessed," being itself a receptacle of holy souls, made illustrious with visitation of angels, and happy by being a repository for such spirits, who, at the day of judgment, shall go forth into eternal glory. In the interim, Christ hath trod all the paths before us, and this also we must pass through, to arrive at the courts of heaven. Justin Martyr said it was the doctrine of heretical persons, to say that the souls of the blessed, instantly upon the separation from their bodies, enter into the highest heaven[c]. And Irenæus makes heaven, and the intermediate receptacle of souls, to be distinct places[d]: both blessed, but hugely differing in degrees.

[a] Symbolum Aquileiense, et ex eo Romanum hodiernum.

[b] —— Ubi duas magnas revelationes sibi obtigisse dixit Paulus, bisque in sublime se raptum; semel ad cœlum tertium, semel ad paradisum. — *Methodius cont. Origen. apud Epiphan.* Idem ait Moses Barcephas, lib. de Paradiso, c. 7. p. 4.

[c] Dial. adv. Tryphon.

[d] Lib. v. c. 3.

Tertullian is dogmatical in the assertion[e], that till the voice of the great archangel be heard, and as long as Christ sits at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for the church, so long blessed souls must expect the assembling of their brethren, the great congregation of the church, that they may all pass, from their outer courts, into the inward tabernacle, the holy of holies, to the throne of God. And as it is certain, that no soul could enter into glory before our Lord entered, by whom we hope to have access: so it is most agreeable to the proportion of the mysteries of our redemption, that we believe the entrance into glory to have been made by our Lord at his glorious ascension, and that his soul went not thither before them, to come back again, to be contracted into the span of humanity, and dwell forty days in his body upon earth. But that he should return from Paradise, that is, from the common receptacle of departed spirits, who died in the love of God, to earth again, had in it no lessening of his condition, since himself, in mercy, called back Lazarus from thence, and some others also returned to live a life of grace, which, in all senses, is less than the least of glories. Sufficient it is to us, that all holy souls, departing, go into the hands, that is, into the custody of our Lord; that "they rest from their labours[f];" that "their works shall follow them," and overtake them, too, at the day of judgment; that they are happy presently; that they are visited by angels[g]; that God sends, as he pleases, excellent irradiations and types of glory, to entertain them in their mansions; that their condition is secured: but "the crown of righteousness is laid up[h]" against the great day of judgment, and then to be produced and given to St. Paul, and "to all that love the coming of our Lord;" that is, to all who either here in duty, or in their receptacles, with joy and

[e] Lib. de Anima; et de Præscript. Idem sentiunt Scriptor Resp. ad Orthod. q. 76. S. Greg. Naz. orat. 10. S. Chrysost. hom. 15. in Matt. S. Ambr. in Micheam, Cyrilli Liturg. Epiphan. ep. apud S. Hier. Theodoretus, Theophylactus, et Vet. passim.

[f] Revel. xiv. 13.

[g] Just. Mart. 75. inter quæst. Gentiles ait, bonos statim duci a morte ad Paradisum, ubi consuetudo et appectus est Angelorum et visus Christi Salvatoris.

[h] 2 Tim. iv. 8.

certain hope, long for the revelation of that day. At the day of judgment, Christ will "send the angels, and they shall gather together the elect from the four winds[l];" and all the refuse of men, evil persons, they shall "throw into everlasting burning." Then our blessed Lord shall call to the elect to enter into the kingdom, and reject the cursed into the portion of devils; "for whom the fire" is but now prepared in the interval. For "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," saith St. Paul, "that every man may receive in his body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil[k]." Out of the body the reception of the reward is not. And, therefore, St. Peter affirms, that "God hath delivered the evil angels into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment[l]." And St. Jude saith, that "the angels which kept not their first faith, but left their first habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day[m]." And, therefore, the devils expostulated with our blessed Saviour, "Art thou come to torment us before the time[n]?" And the same also he does to evil men, "reserving the unjust unto the day of judgment, to be punished[o]." For since the actions which are to be judged, are the actions of the whole man, so also must be the judicature. And our blessed Saviour intimated this to his apostles; "In my Father's house are many mansions: but I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go away, I will come again, and take you unto me; that where I am, there ye may be also[p]." At Christ's second coming this is to be performed[q]. Many outer courts, many different places, or different states, there may be; and yet there is a place whither holy souls shall arrive at last, which was not then ready for us, and was not to be entered into, until the entrance of our Lord had made the "preparation:" and that is, certainly, "the highest

[l] Matt. xiii. 41. et xxiv. 31.

[k] 2 Cor. v. 10. Ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος τὰ ἴδια τοῦ σώματος· sic quidam Cod. τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος· sic communiter, et rectius.

[l] 2 Pet. ii. 4. [m] Jude, 6. [n] Matth. viii. 29.

[o] 2 Pet. ii. 9. Nec tamen quisquam putet animas post mortem protinus judicari: nam omnes in una communique custodia detinentur, donec tempus adveniat, atque maximus judex meritorum faciat examen. — *Lactan.* lib. vii. c. 21.

[p] John, xiv. 2, 3. [q] Satiabor cùm apparueris. Psal. xvii. 15.

heaven," called, by St. Paul, "the third heaven;" because the other receptacles were ready, and full of holy souls, patriarchs, and prophets, and holy men of God; concerning whom St. Paul affirms expressly, that "the fathers received not the promises: God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect[r]:" therefore, certain it is, that their condition was a state of imperfection, and yet they were placed in Paradise, in "Abraham's bosom;" and thither Christ went, and the blessed thief attended him. And then it was that Christ made their condition better: for though still it be a place of relation in order to something beyond it, yet the term and object of their hope is changed: they sate in the regions of darkness, expecting that great promise made to Adam and the patriarchs, the promise of the Messias; but when he that was promised, came, he "preached to the spirits in prison," he communicated to them the mysteries of the Gospel, "the secrets of the kingdom," the things "hidden from eternal ages," and taught them to look up to the glories purchased by his passion, and made the term of their expectation be his second coming, and the objects of their hope the glories of the beatific vision. And although the state of separation is sometimes in Scripture called heaven, and sometimes hell, (for these words in Scripture are of large significations;) yet it is never called "the third heaven," nor "the hell of the damned:" for although, concerning it, nothing is clearly revealed, or what is their portion till the day of judgment; yet it is intimated in a parable, that between good and evil spirits, even in the state of separation, there is distance of place: certain it is, there is great distance of condition; and as the holy souls, in their regions of light, are full of love, joy, hope, and longing for the coming of the great day, so the accursed do expect it with an insupportable amazement, and are presently tormented with apprehensions of the future. Happy are they, that, through Paradise, pass into the kingdom, who, from their highest hope, pass to the greatest charity, from the state of a blessed separation, to the mercies

[r] Heb. xi. 40. Irenæ. lib. v. adv. Hæres. ad fin. Origen. hom. 7. in Levit. Chrys. hom. 39. in 1 Cor. Theodoret. Theophylact. Oecumenius in Hebr. xi. S. Aug. lib. i. Retract. c. 14. Victorin. Mart. in c. 6. Apoc. Ambros. de Bono Mortis, c. 10. et 11.

and gentle sentence of "the day of judgment[s]," which St. Paul prayed to God to grant Onesiphorus; and more explicitly for the Thessalonians, "that their whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus[t]." And I pray God to grant the same to me, and all faithful people whatsoever.

2. As soon as the Lord had "given up his spirit" into the hands of God, "the veil of the temple was rent," the angels, guardians of the place, deserted it, the rites of Moses were laid open, and the enclosures of the tabernacle were disparked, "the earth trembled, the graves were opened," and all the old world, and the old religion, were so shaken towards their first chaos, that if God had not supported the one, and reserved the other for an honourable burial, the earth had left to support her children, and the synagogue had been thrown out to an inglorious exposition and contempt. But yet in these symbols they were changed from their first condition, and passed into a new dominion; all "old things passed away, and all things became new; the earth and the heavens" were reckoned as "a new creation," they passed into another kingdom, under Christ their Lord; and as before the creatures were servants of human necessities, they now become servants of election, and in order to the ends of grace, as before of nature; Christ having now the power to dispose of them in order to his kingdom, and by the administration of his own wisdom. And at the instant of these accidents, God so determined the persuasions of men, that they referred these prodigies to the honour of Christ, and took them as testimonies of that truth, for the affirmation of which the high priest had condemned our dearest Lord: and although the heart of the priest rent not[u], even then when rocks did tear in pieces; yet the people, who saw the passion, "smote their breasts, and returned," and confessed Christ.

3. The graves of the dead were opened at the death, but the dead bodies of the saints that slept, arose not till the

[s] 2 Tim. i. 18.

[t] 1 Thess. v. 23. Vide Irenæum in hunc locum, lib. v. c. 6. adv. Hæres. ubi probat, absque unione corporis, animæ, et spiritus, hominem non esse.

[u] S. Ambros. in Lucam. lib. 10.

resurrection of our Lord; for he was "the first fruits[x]," and they followed him as instant witnesses, to publish the resurrection of their head, which, it is possible, they declared to those to whom they "appeared in the holy city." And amongst these, the curiosity, or pious credulity, of some, have supposed Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who, therefore, were careful to be buried in the land of promise, as having some intimation or hope, that they might be partakers of the earliest glories of the Messias, in whose faith and distant expectation they lived and died. And this calling up of company from their graves did publish to all the world, not only that the Lord himself was risen, according to his so frequent and repeated predictions, but that he meant to raise up all his servants, and that all who believe in him, should be partakers of the resurrection[y].

4. When the soldiers observed that Jesus was dead, out of spite and impotent ineffective malice, one of them pierced his holy side with a spear; and the rock being smitten, it gushed out with "water and blood," streaming forth two sacraments to refresh the church, and opening a gate that all his brethren might enter in, and dwell in the heart of God. And so great a love had our Lord, that he suffered his heart to be opened, to show, that as Eve was formed from the side of Adam, so was the church to be from the side of her Lord, receiving from thence life and spiritual nutriment; which he ministered in so great abundance, and suffered himself to be pierced, that all his blood did stream over us, until he made the fountain dry, and reserved nothing of that by which he knew his church was "to live, and move, and have her being." Thus the stream of blood issued out, to become a fountain for the sacrament of the chalice, and water gushed out, to fill the fonts of baptism and repentance. The blood, being the testimony of the Divine love, calls upon us to die for his love, when he requires it; and the noise of the water calls upon us to purify our spirits, and present our conscience

[x] Euseb. Emiss. hom. 6. de Pasch.

—— tumuloque inferna refringens
Regna, resurgentes secum jubet ire sepultos. — *Prudent. Apoth.*

[y] Ἐλυτρεῦντο πάντες οἱ δίκαιοι, οὓς κατέσχεν ὁ θάνατος. — *S. Cyr. Catech. et Chrys.* hom. 88. in xxvii. Matt.

to Christ "holy and pure, without spot or wrinkle." The blood running upon us, makes us to be of the cognation and family of God; and the water quenches the flames of hell, and the fires of concupiscence.

5. The friends and disciples of the holy Jesus, having devoutly composed his body to burial, anointed it, washed it, and condited it with spices and perfumes, laid it in a sepulchre hewn from a rock in a garden; which, saith Euthymius, was therefore done, to represent, that we were, by this death, returned to Paradise, and the gardens of pleasures and Divine favours, from whence, by the prevarication of Adam, man was expelled. Here he finished the work of his passion, as he had begun it in a garden; and the place of sepulchre, being a rock, serves the ends of pious succeeding ages: for the place remains in all changes of government, of wars, of earthquakes, and ruder accidents, to this day, as a memorial of the sepulchre of our dearest Lord, as a sensible and proper confirmation of the persuasions of some persons, and as an entertainment of their pious fancy and religious affections.

6. But now it was, that in the dark and undiscerned mansions there was a scene of the greatest joy and the greatest horror represented, which yet was known since the first falling of the morning-stars. Those holy souls, whom the prophet Zechariah calls "prisoners of hope, lying in the lake where there is no water[z]," that is, no constant stream of joy to refresh their present condition, (yet supported with certain showers and gracious visitations from God, and illuminations of their hope,) now that they saw their Redeemer come to change their condition, and to improve it into the neighbourhoods of glory and clearer revelations, must needs have the joy of intelligent and beatified understandings, of redeemed captives, of men forgiven after the sentence of death, of men satisfied after a tedious expectation, enjoying and seeing their Lord, whom, for so many ages, they had expected. But the accursed spirits, seeing the darkness of their prison shine with a new light, and their empire invaded, and their retirements of horror discovered, wondered how a man durst venture thither, or if he were a God, how he should

[z] Zech. ix. 11, 12.

come to die. But the holy Jesus was like that body of light, receiving into himself the reflection of all the lesser rays of joy, which the patriarchs felt, and being united to his fountain of felicity, apprehended it yet more glorious. He now felt the effects of his bitter passion to return upon him in comforts; every hour of which was abundant recompense for three hours' passion upon the cross, and became to us a great precedent, to invite us to a toleration of the acts of repentance, mortification, and martyrdom, and that in times of suffering we live upon the stock and expense of faith, as remembering that these few moments of infelicity are infinitely paid with every minute of glory, and yet that the glory, which is certainly consequent, is so lasting and perpetual, that it were enough in a lower joy to make amends, by its continuation of eternity. And let us but call to mind what thoughts we shall have, when we die, or are dead; how we shall then, without prejudice, consider, that if we had done our duty, the trouble and the affliction would now be past, and nothing remain but pleasures and felicities eternal[a], and how infinitely happy we shall then be, if we have done our duty, and how miserable, if not; all the pleasures of sin disappearing, and nothing surviving but a certain and everlasting torment. Let us carry always the same thoughts with us, which must certainly then intervene, and we shall meet the holy Jesus, and partake of his joys, which overflowed his holy soul, when he first entered into the possession of those excellent fruits and effects of his passion.

7. When the third day was come, the soul of Jesus returned from Paradise, and the visitation of separate spirits, and re-entered into his holy body, which he, by his Divine power, did redintegrate, filling his veins with blood, healing all the wounds, excepting those five of his hands, feet, and side, which he reserved as trophies of his victory, and argument of his passion. And as he had comforted the souls of the fathers with the presence of his spirit; so now he saw it to be time to bring comfort to his holy mother, to re-establish the tottering faith of his disciples, to verify his promise, to make demonstration of his Divinity, to lay some superstruc-

[a] Ἂν τι πράξῃς μετὰ πόνου καλῶν, ὁ μὲν πόνος διέχεται, τὸ δὲ καλὸν μένει· ἂν τι ποιήσῃς αἰσχρὸν μετὰ ἡδονῆς, τὸ μὲν ἡδὺ διέχεται, τὸ δὲ αἰσχρὸν μένει. — *Musonius apud A. Gellium*, lib. xvi. c. 1.

tures of his church upon the foundation of his former sermons, to instruct them in the mysteries of his kingdom, to prepare them for the reception of the Holy Ghost: and as he had, in this state of separation, triumphed over hell, so, in his resurrection, he set his foot upon death, and brought it under his dominion; so that although it was not yet destroyed, yet it is made his subject: it hath, as yet, the condition of the Gibeonites, who were not banished out of the land, but they were made "drawers of water and hewers of wood;" so is death made instrumental to Christ's kingdom, but it abides still, and shall till the day of judgment, but shall serve the ends of our Lord, and promote the interests of eternity, and do benefit to the church.

8. And it is considerable, that our blessed Lord having told them, that after three days he would rise again, yet he shortened the time as much as was possible, that he might verify his own prediction, and yet make his absence the less troublesome: he rises "early in the morning the first day of the week:" for so our dearest Lord abbreviates the days of our sorrow, and lengthens the years of our consolation; for he knows that a day of sorrow seems a year, and a year of joy passes like a day; and, therefore, God lessens the one, and lengthens the other, to make this perceived, and that supportable. Now the temple, which the Jews destroyed, God raised up in six and thirty hours: but this "second temple" was more glorious than the first; for now it was clothed with robes of glory, with clarity, agility, and immortality: and though, like Moses descending from the mount, he wore a veil, that the greatness of his splendor might not render him unapt for conversation with his servants; yet the holy Scripture affirms, that he was "now no more to see corruption;" meaning, that now he was separate from the passibility and affections of human bodies, and could suffer St. Thomas to thrust his hand into the wound of his side, and his finger into the holes of his hands, without any grief or smart.

9. But although the graciousness and care of the Lord had prevented all diligence, and satisfied all desires, returning to life before the most forward faith could expect him; yet there were three Maries went to the grave so early, that they prevented the rising of the sun; and though, with great

obedience they staid till the end of the Sabbath, yet, as soon as that was done, they had other parts of duty and affection, which called with greatest importunity to be speedily satisfied. And if obedience had not bound the feet of love, they had gone the day before; but they became to us admirable patterns of obedience to the Divine commandments. For though love were "stronger than death," yet obedience was stronger than love, and made a rare dispute in the spirits of those holy women, in which the flesh and the spirit were not the litigants, but the spirit and the spirit; and they resisted each other, as the angel-guardian of the Jews resisted the tutelar angel of Persia, each striving who should with most love and zeal perform their charge, and God determined. And so he did here too. For the law of the Sabbath was then a Divine commandment; and although piety to the dead, and to such a dead, was ready to force their choice to do violence to their will, bearing them up on wings of desire to the grave of the Lord, yet at last they reconciled love with obedience. For they had been taught, that love is best expressed in keeping of the Divine commandments. But now they were at liberty; and sure enough they made use of its first minute: and going so early to seek Christ, they were sure they should find him.

10. The angels descended guardians of the sepulchre; for God sent his guards too, and they affrighted the watch appointed by Pilate and the priests: but when the women came, they spake like comforters, full of sweetness and consolation, laying aside their affrighting glories, as knowing it is the will of their Lord, that they should minister good to them that love him. But a conversation with angels could not satisfy them, who came to look for the Lord of the angels, and found him not: and when the Lord was pleased to appear to Mary Magdalen, she was so swallowed up with love and sorrow, that she entered into her joy, and perceived it not; she saw the Lord, and knew him not. For so, from the closets of darkness, they that immediately stare upon the sun, perceive not the beauties of the light, and feel nothing but amazement. But the voice of the Lord opened her eyes, and she knew him, and worshipped him, but was denied to touch him, and commanded to tell the apostles: for therefore God ministers to us comforts and revelations, not that we

may dwell in the sensible fruition of them ourselves alone, but that we communicate the grace to others. But when the other women were returned and saw the Lord, then they were all together admitted to the embracement, and to kiss the feet of Jesus. For God hath his opportunities and periods, which at another time he denies; and we must then rejoice in it, when he vouchsafes it, and submit to his Divine will, when he denies it.

11. These good women had the first fruits of the apparition: for their forward love, and the passion of their religion, made greater haste to entertain a grace, and was a greater endearment of their persons to our Lord, than a more sober, reserved, and less active spirit. This is more safe, but that is religious; this goes to God by the way of understanding, that by the will; this is supported by discourse, that by passions; this is the sobriety of the apostles, the other was the zeal of the holy women; and because a strong fancy and an earnest passion, fixed upon holy objects, are the most active and forward instruments of devotion, as devotion is of love, therefore we find God hath made great expressions of his acceptance of such dispositions. And women, and less knowing persons, and tender dispositions, and pliant natures, will make up a greater number in heaven, than the severe, and wary, and inquiring people, who sometimes love because they believe, and believe because they can demonstrate, but never believe because they love. When a great understanding and a great affection meet together, it makes a saint great like an apostle; but they do not well, who make abatement of their religious passions by the severity of their understanding. It is no matter by which we are brought to Christ, so we love him and obey him; but if the production admit of degrees, that instrument is the most excellent, which produces the greatest love: and although discourse, and a sober spirit, be in itself the best, yet we do not always suffer that to be a parent of as great religion as the good women make their fancy, their softness, and their passion.

12. Our blessed Lord appeared next to Simon: and though he and John ran forth together, and St. John outran Simon, although Simon Peter had denied and forsworn his Lord, and St. John never did, and followed him to his passion and his death; yet Peter had the favour of seeing Jesus first.

Which some spiritual persons understand as a testimony, that penitent sinners have accidental eminences and privileges sometimes indulged to them beyond the temporal graces of the just and innocent, as being such who not only need defensatives against the remanent and inherent evils even of repented sins, and their aptnesses to relapse; but also because those—who are true penitents, who understand the infiniteness of the Divine mercy, and that for a sinner to pass from death to life, from the state of sin into pardon and the state of grace, is a greater gift[b], and a more excellent and improbable mutation, than for a just man to be taken into glory,—out of gratitude to God, and endearment for so great a change, added to a fear of returning to such danger and misery, will re-enforce all their industry, and double their study, and observe more diligently, and watch more carefully, and "redeem the time," and make amends for their omissions, and oppose a good to the former evils, beside the duties of the present employment; and then, commonly, the life of a holy penitent is more holy, active, zealous, and impatient of vice, and more rapacious of virtue and holy actions, and arises to greater degrees of sanctity, than the even and moderate affections of just persons, who (as our blessed Saviour's expression is) "need no repentance," that is, no change of state, nothing but a perseverance, and an improvement of degrees. "There is more joy in heaven, before the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons that need it not[c]:" for, "where sin hath abounded, there doth grace superabound;" and that makes joy in heaven.

13. The holy Jesus, having received the affections of his most passionate disciples, the women and St. Peter, puts himself upon the way into the company of two good men going to Emmaus, with troubled spirits and a reeling faith, shaking all its upper building, but leaving some of its foundation firm. To them the Lord discourses of the necessity of the death and resurrection of the Messias, and taught them not to take estimate of the counsels of God by the designs and proportions of man: for God, by ways contrary to

[b] Majus est, peccatorem ex peccato in gratiam migrare, quàm ex hoc mundo in cœlum.—*S. August.*

[c] Luke, xv. 7.

human judgment, brings to pass the purposes of his eternal providence. The glories of Christ were not made pompous by human circumstances; his kingdom was spiritual: he was to enter into felicities through the gates of death; he refused to do miracles before Herod, and yet did them before the people; he confuted his accusers by silence, and did not descend from the cross, when they offered to believe in him, if he would; but left them to be persuaded by greater arguments of his power, the miraculous circumstances of his death, and the glories of his resurrection; and, by walking in the secret paths of Divine election, hath commanded us to adore his footsteps, to admire and revere his wisdom, to be satisfied with all the events of providence, and to rejoice in him, if by afflictions he makes us holy, if by persecutions he supports and enlarges his church, if by death he brings us to life; so we arrive at the communion of his felicities, we must let him choose the way; it being sufficient that he is our guide, and our support, and our "exceeding great reward." For therefore Christ preached to the two disciples, going to Emmaus, the way of the cross, and the necessity of that passage, that the wisdom of God might be glorified, and the conjectures of man ashamed. But whilst his discourse lasted, they knew him not; but, in the breaking of bread, he discovered himself. For he turned their meal into a sacrament, and their darkness to light; and having to his sermon added the sacrament, opened all their discerning faculties, the eyes of their body, and their understanding too; to represent to us, that when we are blessed with the opportunities of both those instruments, we want no exterior assistance to guide us in the way to the knowing and enjoying of our Lord.

14. But the apparitions which Jesus made, were all upon the design of laying the foundation of all Christian graces; for the begetting and establishing faith, and an active confidence in their persons, and building them up on the great fundamentals of the religion. And therefore he appointed a general meeting upon a mountain in Galilee, that the number of witnesses might not only disseminate the fame, but establish the article, of the resurrection; for upon that are built all the hopes of a Christian; and "if the dead rise not, then are we of all men most miserable," in quitting the present

possessions, and entertaining injuries and affronts without hopes of reparation. But we lay two gages in several repositories; the body in the bosom of the earth, the soul in the bosom of God: and as we here live by faith, and lay them down with hope; so the resurrection is a restitution of them both, and a state of re-union. And therefore, although the glory of our spirits, without the body, were joy great enough to make compensation for more than the troubles of all the world; yet, because one shall not be glorified without the other, they being of themselves incomplete substances, and God having revealed nothing clearly concerning actual and complete felicities till the day of judgment, when it is promised our bodies shall rise; therefore it is, that the resurrection is the great article upon which we rely, and which Christ took so much care to prove and ascertain to so many persons, because, if that should be disbelieved with which all our felicities are to be received, we have nothing to establish our faith, or entertain our hope, or satisfy our desires, or make retribution for that state of secular inconveniences, in which, by the necessities of our nature, and the humility and patience of our religion, we are engaged.

15. But I consider, that holy Scripture only instructs us concerning "the life of this world," and "the life of the resurrection, the life of grace," and "the life of glory," both in the body, that is, a life of the whole man; and whatsoever is spoken of the soul, considers it as an essential part of man, relating to his whole constitution, not as it is of itself an intellectual and separate substance; for all its actions which are separate and removed from the body, are relative and incomplete. Now, because the soul is an incomplete substance, and created in relation to the body, and is but a part of the whole man, if the body were as eternal and incorruptible as the soul, yet the separation of the one from the other would be, as now it is, that which we call "natural death;" and supposing that God should preserve the body for ever, or restore it at the day of judgment to its full substance and perfect organs, yet the man would be dead for ever, if the soul for ever should continue separate from the body. So that the other life, that is, the state of resurrection, is a re-uniting soul and body. And although, in a *philosophical* sense, the resurrection is of the body, that is,

a restitution of our flesh and blood and bones, and is called "resurrection," as the entrance into the state of resurrection may have the denomination of the whole; yet, in the sense of Scripture, the resurrection is the restitution of our life, the renovation of the whole man, the state of re-union; and until that be, the man is not, but he is dead, and only his essential parts are deposited and laid up in trust: and, therefore, whatsoever the soul does or perceives in its incomplete condition, is but to it as embalming and honourable funerals to the body, and a safe monument to preserve it in order to a living again; and the felicities of the interval are wholly in order to the next life. And therefore, if there were to be no resurrection, as these intermedial joys should not be at all; so, as they are, they are but relative and incomplete: and therefore all our hopes, all our felicities, depend upon the resurrection; without it we should never be persons, men or women; and then the state of separation could be nothing but a fantasm, trees ever in blossom, never bearing fruit, corn for ever in the blade, eggs always in the shell, a hope eternal, never to pass into fruition, that is, for ever to be deluded, for ever to be miserable. And therefore it was an elegant expression of St. Paul[d], "Our life is hid with Christ in God;" that is, our life is passed into custody, the dust of our body is numbered, and the spirit is refreshed, visited, and preserved in celestial mansions: but it is not properly called a life; for all this while the man is dead, and shall then live, when Christ produces this hidden life at the great day of restitution. But our faith of all this article is well wrapped up in the words of St. John[e]: "Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The middle state is not it which Scripture hath propounded to our faith, or to our hope; the reward is then when Christ shall appear: but, in the mean time, the soul can converse with God and with angels, just as the holy prophets did in their dreams, in which they received great degrees of favour and revelation[f].

[d] Coloss. iii. 3. [e] 1 John, iii. 2.

[f] Ὅταν ἐν τῷ ὑπνοῦν καθ' ἑαυτὴν γενήσεται ἡ ψυχὴ, τότε τὴν ἰδίαν ἀπολαβοῦσα φύσιν, προμαντεύεταί τέ καὶ προαγορεύει τὰ μέλλοντα. Τοιαύτη δέ ἐστι καὶ ἐν τῷ κατὰ τὸν θάνατον χαρίζεσθαι τῶν σωμάτων. — *Arist. apud Sextum Empiric.*

But this is not to be reckoned any more than an entrance or a waiting for the state of our felicity. And since the glories of heaven is the great fruit of election, we may consider that the body is not predestinate, nor the soul, alone, but the whole man; and, until the parts embrace again in an essential complexion, it cannot be expected either of them should receive the portion of the predestinate. But the article and the event of future things is rarely set in order by St. Paul[s]: "But ye are come unto the Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all;" and then follows, after this "general assembly," after "the Judge of all" appears, "to the spirits of just men made perfect;" that is, re-united to their bodies, and entering into glory. The beginning of the contrary opinion brought some new practices and appendant persuasions into the church, or at least promoted them much. For those doctors, who, receding from the primitive belief of this article, taught that the glories of heaven are fully communicated to the souls before the day of judgment, did also upon that stock teach the invocation of saints, whom they believed to be received into glory, and insensibly also brought in the opinion of purgatory, that the less perfect souls might be glorified in the time that they assigned them. But the safer opinion, and more agreeable to piety, is that which I have now described from Scripture and the purest ages of the church.

16. When Jesus appeared to the apostles, he gave them his peace for a benediction; and when he departed, he left them peace for a legacy, and gave them, according to two former promises, the power of making peace, and reconciling souls to God by a ministerial act; so conveying his Father's mercy, which himself procured by his passion, and actuates by his intercession and the giving of his grace, that he might comply with our infirmities, and minister to our needs by instruments even and proportionate to ourselves; making our brethren the conduits of his grace, that the excellent effect of the Spirit might not descend upon us, as the law

[s] Heb. xii. 22, 23.

upon Mount Sinai, in expresses of greatness and terror, but in earthen vessels, and images of infirmity: so God manifesting his power in the smallness of the instrument, and descending to our needs, not only in giving the grace of pardon, but also in the manner of its ministration. And I meditate upon the greatness of this mercy, by comparing this grace of God, and the blessing of the judgment and sentence we receive at the hand of the church, with the judgment which God makes at the hour of death upon them, who have despised this mercy, and neglected all the other parts of their duty. The one is a judgment of mercy, the other of vengeance: in the one, the devil is the accuser, and heaven and earth bear witness; in the other, the penitent sinner accuses himself: in that, the sinner gets a pardon; in the other, he finds no remedy: in that, all his good deeds are remembered and returned, and his sins are blotted out; in the other, all his evil deeds are represented with horror and a sting, and remain for ever: in the first, the sinner changes his state for a state of grace, and only smarts in some temporal austerities and acts of exterior mortification; in the second, his temporal estate is changed to an eternity of pain: in the first, the sinner suffers the shame of one man or one society, which is sweetened by consolation, and homilies of mercy and health; in the latter, all his sins are laid open before all the world, and himself confounded in eternal amazement and confusions: in the judgment of the church, the sinner is honoured by all for returning to the bosom of his mother, and the embraces of his heavenly Father; in the judgment of vengeance, he is laughed at by God, and mocked by accursed spirits, and perishes without pity: in this he is prayed for by none, helped by none, comforted by none, and he makes himself a companion of devils to everlasting ages; but in the judgment of repentance and tribunal of the church, the penitent sinner is prayed for by a whole army of militant saints, and causes joy to all the church triumphant. And to establish this tribunal in the church, and to transmit pardon to penitent sinners, and a salutary judgment upon the person and the crime, and to appoint physicians and guardians of the soul, was one of the designs and mercies of the resurrection of Jesus. And let not any Christian man, either by false

opinion, or an unbelieving spirit, or an incurious apprehension, undervalue or neglect this ministry, which Christ hath so sacredly and solemnly established. Happy is he that dashes his sins against the rock, upon which the church is built; that the church, gathering up the planks and fragments of the shipwreck, and the shivers of the broken heart, may re-unite them, pouring oil into the wounds made by the blows of sin, and restoring with meekness, gentleness, care, counsel, and authority, persons overtaken in a fault. For that act of ministry is not ineffectual, which God hath promised shall be ratified in heaven; and that authority is not contemptible, which the holy Jesus conveyed by breathing upon his church the Holy Ghost. But Christ intended that those, whom he had made guides of our souls, and judges of our consciences in order to counsel and ministerial pardon, should also be used by us in all cases of our souls, and that we go to heaven the way he hath appointed, that is, by offices and ministries ecclesiastical.

17. When our blessed Lord had so confirmed the faith of the church, and appointed an ecclesiastical ministry, he had but one work more to do upon earth, and that was the institution of the holy sacrament of baptism, which he ordained as a solemn initiation and mysterious profession of the faith, upon which the church is built; making it a solemn publication of our profession, the rite of stipulation or entering covenant with our Lord, the solemnity of the paction evangelical, in which we undertake to be disciples to the holy Jesus; that is, to believe his doctrine, to fear his threatenings, to rely upon his promises, and to obey his commandments all the days of our life; and he, for his part, actually performs much, and promises more[h]; he takes off all the guilt of our preceding days, purging our souls, and making them clean, as in the day of innocence; promising withal, that if we perform our undertaking, and remain in the state in which he now puts us, he will continually assist us with his Spirit[i], prevent and attend us with his grace; he will deliver us from the power of the devil; he will keep our souls in merciful,

[h] Mark, xvi. 16. Acts, ii. 38, and xxii. 16. Rom. vi. 3, 4. Eph. iv. 5, &c. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Coloss. ii. 12. Gal. iii. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

[i] Matt. xxviii. 20.

joyful, and safe custody, till the great day of the Lord; he will then raise our bodies from the grave; he will make them to be spiritual and immortal; he will re-unite them to our souls, and beatify both bodies and souls in his own kingdom, admitting them into eternal and unspeakable glories. All which that he might verify and prepare respectively, in the presence of his disciples he ascended into the bosom of God, and the eternal comprehensions of celestial glory.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who hast overcome death, and triumphed over all the powers of hell, darkness, sin, and the grave; manifesting the truth of thy promises, the power of thy divinity, the majesty of thy person, the rewards of thy glory, and the mercies and excellent designs of thy evangelical kingdom, by thy glorious and powerful resurrection; preserve my soul from eternal death, and make me to rise from the death of sin, and to live the life of grace; loving thy perfections, adoring thy mercy, pursuing the interest of thy kingdom; being united to the church, under thee, our Head; conforming to thy holy laws; established in faith, entertained and confirmed with a modest, humble, and certain hope, and sanctified by charity; that I, engraving thee in my heart, and submitting to thee in my spirit, and imitating thee in thy glorious example, may be partaker of thy resurrection; which is my hope and my desire, the support of my faith, the object of my joy, and the strength of my confidence. In thee, holy Jesus, do I trust: I confess thy faith, I believe all that thou hast taught; I desire to perform all thy injunctions, and my own undertaking: my soul is in thy hand; do thou support and guide it, and pity my infirmities; and when thou shalt reveal thy great day, show to me the mercies and effects of thy advocation, and intercession, and redemption. "Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God; for in thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded." Thou art just, thou art merciful, thou art gracious and compassionate; thou hast done miracles and prodigies of favour, to me and all the world. Let not those great

actions and sufferings be ineffective; but make me capable and receptive of thy mercies, and then I am certain to receive them. I am thine, O save me! thou art mine, O holy Jesus! O dwell with me for ever, and let me dwell with thee, adoring and praising the eternal glories of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

END OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

ΆΓΙΟΣ ΆΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ.

CONTEMPLATIONS

OF

THE STATE OF MAN,

IN

THIS LIFE,

AND

IN THAT WHICH IS TO COME.

TO

THE READER.

COURTEOUS READER,

I HAVE soberly considered these holy and devout "Contemplations of the State of Man in this Life, and in that which is to come;" I never read any thing with more comfort, or which made a greater impression upon my soul. Therefore, hoping they may have the like effect upon others, I commend them to all persons, who desire happiness in this life, or blessedness in the future. Here thou mayest see the uncertainty of mortal life, the instability of human greatness, the fate of kingdoms, and the period of empires; the world's funeral, time laid in the dust, and the dread and horror of the last judgment. Here thou mayest have a prospect of the grandeur of heaven, the glory of the blessed, and the miseries and infelicities of the damned. The due consideration whereof will beget in thee holiness of life; nothing can be of more consequence, in these worst of days, to promote thy future happiness and glory. True piety sows the seeds of the most solid greatness. Men endowed with moral virtues, they are like diamonds, rich,

but unpolished; it is the fear of God that adds the true lustre, and sets them fair.

In the service of God, all the items of happiness and blessedness are summed up.

Dost thou desire riches? Serve God, and thou canst never be poor. Dost thou desire preferment? Live a holy and devout life, (as these Contemplations are the best introduction to it,) and thou shalt go ἀπὸ χάριτος εἰς δόξαν, from grace to glory; grace is "Aurora gloriæ;" glory, nothing but a bright constellation of graces; and happiness, nothing but the quintessence of holiness. I shall not detain thee longer, but beg of God that these holy Contemplations may so influence thy soul, that thou mayest be made partaker of that eternal weight of glory, which is laid up for all those that love and serve him.

I am thy Friend, and

Servant in Christ Jesus,

B. HALE, D.D.

TO

THE READER.

CANDID READER,

THE most learned and pious JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D., late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, in Ireland, having left these holy Contemplations in the hands of a worthy friend of his, with a full purpose to have printed them, if he had lived; but since it hath pleased God to take that devout and holy person to himself,—the better to advance devotion and sanctity of life, and to make men less in love with this frail life, and more with that which is eternal, it is thought fit to make them public. I beseech God to conduct us all, by the many helps and assistances, which he hath been graciously pleased to afford us, to further us in piety and holiness of life, is the prayer of

Thy Friend,

ROBERT HARRIS.

CONTEMPLATIONS

OF

THE STATE OF MAN.

LIB. I.

CHAP. I.

Contemplations on Time, and of the State of Man in this Life.

All philosophers which have thought of the nature of time, and which, with much subtlety, have disputed what it was; at length come to conclude, That they knew not what it is; the most they can reach unto is, That no time is long; and that can only be called time which is present, the which is but a moment; and how can that be said to be, since the only cause why it is, is because it shall not be, but is to pass into the *preterit;* so as we cannot affirm it to have a being. The being of time consists only of a succession of instants, or transitory being, subsisting only by a flux of moments, and changes as many faces as it contains instants; it slides out of his hands that strives to hold it: in naming of it, we lose it; so subtle it is by nature, that it were to weigh the fire, and measure the wind, to strive to stay this Proteus; in an instant he vanisheth; and while you think to show him with your finger, he is gone. We have only a moment in our power, and a moment which is lost, in the very instant in which we think to grasp it. See then, what it is to trust unto human life, since it is a member of that which is so unconstant and rapid as time, which runs and passes away according to the course of the sun, and revolutions of the stars in the firmament. Know then, that death follows thee not with leaden feet; it runs after thee with a motion equal to that of the stars, whose swiftness is so prodigious, that, according to the more moderate account of Clavius, they run in one day more than a

thousand seventeen millions and a half of leagues; and in one hour, more than forty-two millions. After this rate doth death pursue thee; how is it that thou tremblest not? How comes it that thou fearest not? Even life itself is given to us but by pieces, and mingles as many parts of death as there are of life; the age of infancy dies, when we enter into that of childhood; and that of childhood, when we become youths; that of youth, when we come to age of manhood; that, when we are old; and even old age itself expires, when we become decrepit: so that, during the same life, we find many deaths, and yet can hardly persuade ourselves that we shall die once. Let us cast our eyes upon our life past; let us consider what is become of our infancy, childhood, and youth; they are now dead in us: in the same manner shall those ages of our life, which are to come, die also. Neither do we only die in the principal times of life, but every hour, every moment, includes a kind of death in the succession and change of things. What content is there in life, which dies not by some succeeding sorrow? What affliction of pain, which is not followed by some equal, or greater grief than itself? Why are we grieved for what is absent, since it offends us being present? What we desire with impatience, being possessed, brings care and solicitude, grief and affliction.

The short time which any pleasure stays with us, it is not to be enjoyed wholly, and all at once, but tasted by parts; so as, when the second part comes, we feel not the pleasure of the first, lessening itself every moment, and we ourselves still dying with it; there being no instant of life, wherein death gains not ground of us; the motion of the heavens is but the swift turn of the spindle, which rolls up the thread of our lives; and a most fleet horse, upon which death runs post after us. There is no moment of life, wherein death hath not equal jurisdiction; and there is no point of life, which we divide not with death; so as, if well considered, we live but only one point, and have not life but for the present instant. Our years past are now vanished; and we enjoy no more of them, than if we were already dead; the years to come we live not, and possess no more of them, than if we were not yet born; yesterday is gone, to-morrow we know not what shall be; of to-day many hours are past, and we

live them not; others are to come, and whether we shall live them or no, is uncertain; so that, all counts cast up, we live but this present moment; and in this also we are dying; so that we cannot say, that life is any thing but the half of an instant, an indivisible point, divided betwixt it and death.

With reason may this life be called the shadow of death, since, under the shadow of life, death steals upon us; and as at every step the body takes, the shadow takes another, so at every pace our lives move forward, death equally advances with it; and as eternity is ever in beginning, and is, therefore, a perpetual beginning; so life is ever ending and concluding, and may, therefore, be called a perpetual end, and a continual death. There is no pleasure in life, which although it should last twenty continued years, that cannot be present with us longer than an instant; and with such counterpoise, that in it death no less appeareth, than life is enjoyed.

If a man were lord of infinite worlds, and possessed infinite riches; if they were at last to end, and he to leave them, they were to be valued as nothing; and if all things temporal have this evil property, to fade and perish, they ought to have no more esteem, than if they were not.

O miserable condition of human nature! vain is all that we live without Christ; "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flower of the field." Where is now that comely visage? Where is now the dignity of the whole body, with which, as with a fair garment, the beauty of the soul was once clothed? Ah! pity! the lily is withered, the purple of the violet turned into paleness; therefore let us consider, what in time must become of us, and what, will we, or will not, cannot be far off; for should our lives exceed the term of nine hundred years, and that the days of Methusalem were bestowed upon us; yet all the length of life once past, (and pass it must,) were nothing; and betwixt him who lives but ten years, and him who lives a thousand, the end of life, and the unavoidable necessity of death once come, all is the same, save only he who lives longer, departs heavier laden with sins.

Vain are all honours. Vain are the applauses, the riches and pleasures of life, which, being itself so short and so frail, makes all things vain which depend upon it, and so becomes itself a vanity of vanities, and an universal vanity. What account wouldest thou make of a tower founded upon a

quicksand? Or what safety wouldest thou hope for in a ship bored with holes? Certainly thou oughtest to give no more esteem unto the things of this world, since they are founded upon a thing so unstable as this life. What can all human things be, since life, which sustains it, hath, according to David, no more consistence than smoke; or, according to Aquinas, than a little vapour, which in a moment vanisheth? Although it should endure a thousand years, yet, coming to an end, it were equal to that which lasted but a day; for as well the felicity of a long, as a short life, is but smoke and vanity, since they both pass away, and conclude in death.

Guerricus, a most famous divine, hearing the fifth chapter of Genesis read, wherein are recounted the sons and descendants of Adam, in these terms: "The whole life of Adam was nine hundred and thirty years, and he died; the life of his son, Seth, was nine hundred and twelve years, and he died;" and so of the rest; began to think with himself, that if such and so great men, after so long time, ended in death, it was not safe to lose more time in this world, but so to secure his life, that, losing it here, he might find it hereafter. What can the delights of man be, since his life is but a dream, a shadow, and as the twinkling of an eye! If the most long life be short, what can be the pleasures of that moment, by which is lost eternal happiness? O, how vain are men, who, seeing life so short, endeavour to live long, and not to live well! Since it is a thing most certain, that every man may live well; but no man, what age soever he attains unto, can live long; every day we die, and every day we lose some part of life; and in our growth, our life decreases and grows less; and this very day wherein we live, we divide with death; our life, in the book of wisdom, is compared unto the passing of a shadow, which as it may be said to be a kind of night, so life may be called a kind of death; for, as the shadow hath some part of light, some of darkness; so our life hath some part of death, and some of life, until it comes to end in a pure death; and since it is to end in a not being, it is very little to be regarded; especially compared with eternity, which hath a being constant and for ever. The shadow, wheresoever it passes, leaves no track behind it; and of the greatest personages in the world, when they are once dead, then there remains no more than if they had never lived.

How many preceding emperors in the Assyrian monarchy were lords of the world, as well as Alexander? And now we remain not only ignorant of their monuments, but know not so much as their names: and of the same great Alexander, what have we at this day, except the vain noise of his fame? There is nothing constant in this life; the moon hath every month her changes; but the life of man hath them every day, every hour; now he is sick, now in health, now sorrowful, now merry, now fearful. With what imaginations is he afflicted? With how many labours and toils does he daily wrestle? With what thoughts and apprehensions doth he torment himself? What dangers of soul and body doth he run into? What vanity is he forced to behold? What injuries to suffer? What necessities and afflictions? Nay, such is our whole life, that it seems unto me little less evil than that of hell, but only for the hope we have of heaven; our infancy is full of ignorance and fears, our youth of sin, our age of sorrow, and our whole life of dangers. There is none content with his condition, but he who will die whilst he lives; insomuch as life cannot be good, unless it most resemble death. Since, therefore, the whole time of this life is so short, and we know not how long it will last, let us resolve not to lose the opportunity of gaining eternity. Although we were certain to live yet a hundred years longer, we ought not to spare one minute from the gaining of eternity; but being uncertain how long we are to live, and perhaps shall die to-morrow, how can we be so careless, as to let the securing of our glory pass, which hereafter will never be offered? Consider what an eternal repentance will follow thée, if thou makest not use of the occasion of time for the purchasing of the kingdom of heaven; especially when thou shalt see, that, with so little ado, thou mightest have gained that everlasting glory, which, to satisfy a short pleasure, thou hast lost for ever.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who dwellest in eternity, whose power is eternal, and whose kingdom is the kingdom of all ages! Take me by thy right hand, O Lord; conduct me to thy eternal glory: let me esteem all things as nothing, in

respect of eternity. Grant, O Lord, that I may so pass through things temporal, that I do not finally lose the things eternal. Amen.

CHAP. II.

All Things on this Side Heaven are inconstant and transitory.

As time itself is in a perpetual succession, and mutation, being the companion of motion, so it fixes this ill condition unto most of those things which pass along in it; the which not only have an end, and that a short one, but even, during the shortness of time which they last, have a thousand changes; and before their ends, many ends; and before their deaths, many deaths; each particular change, which our life suffers, being the death of some estate, or part of it. For as death is the total change of life, every change is the death of some part. Sickness is the death of health, sleeping of waking, sorrow of joy, impatience of quiet, youth of infancy, age of youth. The same condition hath the universal world, and all things in it; so that all things which follow time, and even time itself, at last must die. All human things, as well intrinsically, and of their own nature, as by external violences which they suffer, are subject to perish; the fairest flower withers of itself, yet is oftentimes before borne away by the wind, or perishes by some storm of hail. The most exact beauties lose their lustre by age, but are often before blasted by some violent fever. The strongest and most sumptuous palaces decay with continuance, if before not ruined by fire or earthquake. Cast your eyes upon those things which men judge most worthy to endure, and made them to the end they should be eternal: how many changes and deaths have they suffered!

Gregory, of Nazianzen, placed the city of Thebes, in Egypt, as the chiefest of those wonders which the old world admired[a]; most of the houses were of alabaster-marble, spotted with drops of gold, which made them appear most splendid and magnificent; upon the walls were many pleasant

[a] Nazian. in Monod.— *Plin.* lib. xxxvi. c. 8.

gardens, the gates no fewer than a hundred, out of which the prince could draw forth numerous armies without noise. Pomponius Mela writes, that out of every port there issued ten thousand armed men, which, in the whole, came to be an army of a million; yet all this huge multitude could not secure it from a small army conducted by a youth, who took and destroyed it[b].

Marcus Polus writes, that he passed by the city of Quinsay, which contained fourscore millions of souls[c]: and Nicholas de Conti, passing not many years after by the same way, found the city wholly destroyed, and begun to be newly built after another form. But yet greater than this was the city of Nineveh, which was of three days' journey; and it is now many ages since, that we know not where it stood. No less stately, but perhaps better fortified, was the city of Babylon: and that which was the imperial city of the world, became a desert, an habitation of harpies, satyrs, and monsters; and the walls, which were two hundred feet in height, and fifty in breadth, could not defend it from time.

It is not much that cities have suffered so many changes, since monarchies and empires have done the same; and so often hath the world changed her face, as she hath changed her monarch and master. He who had seen the world as it was in the time of the Assyrians, would not have known it as it was in the time of the Persians; and he who knew it in the time of the Persians, would not have judged it for the same when the Greeks were masters; after, in the time of the Romans, it appeared with a face not known before; and he who knew it then, would not know it now; and some years hence it will put on another form, being in nothing more like itself than in its perpetual changes. Therefore, nothing does more deserve our scorn and contempt, and more now than ever; since it becomes every day worse, and grows old, and decays with age; neither is the world only grown worse in the natural frame of it, but is also much defaced in the moral; the manners of men have altered it more than the violences and encounters of the elements.

How many kingdoms were overthrown by the covetousness

[b] Pomp. Me. lib. i. c. 9. Evag. lib. ii. c. 1.
[c] Polus, lib. ii. rerum Indic. c. 68.

of Cyrus! The ambition of Alexander did not only destroy a great part of the world, but made it put on a clear other face than it had before. That which time spares, is often snatched away by the covetousness of the thief; and how many lives are cut off by revenge, before they arrive unto old age!

There is no stability in any thing, and least in man; who is not only changeable in himself, but changes all things besides.

One day often makes an end of great riches. Many personages of great honour and esteem, changing their fortune, become infamous. Dionysius was thrust from his throne, from a king of Sicily, to be schoolmaster in Corinth, and taught boys; who could think, that, from a king, he should be necessitated to become a schoolmaster! Who would not wonder at the cozenage of the world, that should see him in his royal palace with a sceptre in his hand, compassed about with his servants, and the great ones of his kingdom; and should after behold him in his school, managing a rod, in the midst of a number of boys! Crœsus, the most rich king of Lydia, who, being in hope to overthrow the Persians, not only lost his own kingdom, but fell into the power of his enemies, and failed a little of being burnt alive. Particular persons are not only witnesses that all human things are dreams: but cities, nations, and kingdoms; nothing remains like itself; all things present are more frail and weak than the webs of spiders, and more deceitful than dreams. From this inconstancy of human things, we may extract a constancy for ourselves; first, by despising things so transitory; secondly, by a resolute hope of an end or change in our adversity and afflictions; since nothing here below is constant, but all mutable; and as things sometimes change from good to evil, so they may also from evil unto good.

There is no confidence to be placed in human prosperity; for neither kingdom, empire, nor any greatness whatsoever, can secure their owners from ruin and misfortunes. Behold Andronicus clothed in purple, adored by nations, commanding the east, his temples enriched with a royal diadem, the imperial sceptre in his hands, and his very shoes studded with oriental gems; presently after, he is insulted over by the basest of his people, buffeted by women, and pelted with

dirt and stones in his imperial city; and lastly, they hung him up by the heels betwixt two pillars, and there left him to die. This is enough to make us contemn all temporal goods and human felicity, which not only passes away with time, but often changes into greater misfortunes. What esteem can that merit, which stands exposed to so much misery, which is by so much the more sensible to the sufferer, by how much it was less expected.

The emperor Vitellius, whom the east and west acknowledged to be the great monarch of the world, in Rome saluted with so glorious titles, that he seemed to be all he could desire less than a god; but wherein ended all his majesty, but in the greatest infelicity and misery that can be imagined? The people having violently seized upon him, tied a rope about his neck, and his hands behind him, tore his garments from his back, and struck a dagger under his chin; they haled him ignominiously up and down the streets of Rome, cast filth in his face, and reviled him with a thousand injurious speeches, and at last killed him in the market-place; and threw him down the Gemonies, where they used to fling the corpses of malefactors. Folly is all human greatness, since at last it must end, and perhaps in a disastrous and unhappy conclusion.

Who would have imagined that Valerianus the emperor, who was mounted upon his brave courser, trapped with gold, clad in purple, crowned with the imperial diadem, adored by nations, and commanding over kingdoms, should be taken prisoner by the king of Persia, be kept inclosed in a cage like some wild beast, used as a footstool for the king to get on horseback! But such contrary fortunes happen in human life, let us not therefore trust in it; crowns nor sceptres do not secure us from the inconstancy of changes; and we may better trust unto the wind, or to letters written upon water, than unto human felicity.

The changes of fortune are but exchanges of one condition for another; no man can fall when he is at lowest; and the lowest and basest of all things is human felicity, which when it quits us, we fall not, but change it, and perhaps for the better: the life of man is a lamentable tragedy, wherein we observe such contrary extremes. I know all human greatness is vanity; therefore I will never

grieve for the loss of that which was nothing, that is not worthy of grief; which deserves not love: things below, as they merit not my affections when I enjoy them, so they ought not to vex and afflict me when I lose them.

What are imperial diadems? what are thrones, and majesty? what are ornaments of gold and silver? All are vanity, and vanity of vanities. What were, then, the spectacles of the amphitheatre, the games of the circus, and the seignory of the world, but vanity of vanities, universal vanity? The same would Crœsus have preached from the flames; Bajazet from his cage; and Dionysius from his school. If we had the opinion of those persons which are now damned, what would they think of majesty which they enjoyed in this life? Vanity! they will say it is a smoke, a dream, a shadow. Where is now the splendour of the consulate? where the lictors and their fasces? where the crowns and tapestry? where the banquets and revels? All those things are perished; a boisterous wind hath blown away the leaves, and left the naked trees tottering, and almost plucked up by the roots. Where are the seven wonders of the world? where is Nero's golden palace? where are Diocletian's hot baths? where is Julius's colossus; or Pompey's amphitheatre? They are all gone, there is no print of them remaining. And if we consider the greatness of this world, we shall perceive, that by how much it is more glorious, by so much it is more vain. What greater majesty, than that of the Roman empire? yet scarce was the election of a Roman emperor known, before he was murdered: amongst nineteen or twenty emperors which passed betwixt Antoninus the philosopher and Claudius the Second, not one escaped a violent death; so as the greatest felicity of the world was tied to the greatest mishap: therefore Dionysius, to express the miseries and infelicities of the lives of kings, said, "It was like that of condemned persons, which every hour expect death." "O crown!" said king Antigonus, more noble than happy, "if men knew how full thou art of cares and dangers, no man would take thee up, though he should find thee in the streets." And Constantine the Great, who was arrived at the height of human felicity, said, "His life was something more honourable than that of shepherds, but much more troublesome." There is no felicity upon earth, which carries not its counterpoise of

misfortunes; no happiness which mounts so high, which is not depressed by some calamity.

The felicity of this life is but a shadow of true happiness; for the shadow is not a body, but a resemblance of a body: and seeming to be something, is nothing; the inconstancy and speedy change of human things deserves this name, because the shadow is always altering, and ends on a sudden: and as the shadow, when it is at length, and can increase no farther, is nearest to the end; so temporal goods, and human fortunes, when they are mounted up as high as the stars, are then nearest to vanish, and disappear suddenly. Those who work in perspective, will so paint a room, that the light entering only through some little hole, you shall perceive beautiful and perfect figures and shapes; but if you open the windows, and let in a full light, at most you shall see but some imperfect lines and shadows; so things of this world seem great and beautiful unto those who are in darkness, and have but little light in heaven; but those who enjoy the perfect light of truth and faith, find nothing in them of substance.

The things of this world are not only a shadow, but are very deceitful; they promise us goods, and give us evils; promise us ease, and give us cares; promise security, and give us danger; promise us great contents, and give us great vexations; there is no felicity upon earth, no happiness which mounts so high, which is not depressed by some low calamity: it is not needful to attend the end of life to see the imposture of it, it is enough to see the alterations whilst it lasts; be assured, that vain is all the greatness of the earth, if that of heaven be not gained by it. Since, then, all kingdoms, empires, honours, and greatness whatsoever, are but a shadow, and will presently vanish, and we are here in this world but as in an inn, from whence we are suddenly to depart; let us take care for our journey, and furnish ourselves with provision and a viaticum for eternity; let us clothe ourselves with such garments as we may carry along with us; this may be our comfort, that our wealth, whether we will or no, may be taken from us; but eternal happiness, unless by our fault, cannot; we may be deprived of honours against our wills, but not of our virtues except we consent; temporal goods may perish, be stolen, and lost many ways;

but spiritual goods can only be forsaken; and are then only lost, when we leave them by our sins; the roses of glory in heaven do never fade, nor doth custom dull the lively taste of those celestial delights; let us therefore convey our riches here through the hands of the poor in bills of exchange, into the eternity of glory, where such money is current, for our good works will follow us. I will therefore preserve myself in humility, I will not confide in prosperity, nor presume upon my virtues, though never so great, since every man is subject to fall into those misfortunes he little thinks of: I will not trust in life, because it may fail, whilst the goods of it remain; and will as little trust in them, because they may likewise fail, whilst it continues.

Blessed Lord! thou art my salvation, thou art my glory, my aid, and all my hope is in thee: at thy right hand there are riches, greatness, and powers, for ever, without end.

CHAP. III.

All Sublunary Things are contemptible, and of no Value.

The things of this world, though their vanity, which swells and blows them up, seems to extend and engreaten them; yet they are in themselves contemptible and little; those things which seem to make the greatest noise, are honour, fame, and renown; we shall see how narrow they are; and hear one who was placed in the highest degree of glory and dignity in the whole world, since he was lord of it, the emperor Marcus Antoninus, who speaks in this manner: Perhaps thou art solicitous of honour; behold how quickly oblivion blots out all things; behold a chaos of eternity both before and after!

How vain is the noise of fame! how great the inconstancy and uncertainty of human judgments and opinions! in how narrow a compass are all things enclosed! The world is but a point; and of it, how small a corner of it is inhabited! and who, and how many, are those in it, who are to praise thee! He who desires fame and honour after death,

thinks not that he who is to remember him, shall shortly die also; and in the same manner he who is to succeed after him, until that all memory, which is to be propagated by mortal men, be blotted out. But suppose that those who are to remember thee, were immortal; what could it import thee being dead? nay, being alive, what could it profit thee to be praised? All that is fair, is fair of itself, and is perfected with itself; and to be praised, is no part of the beauty.

Consider the vanity of those titles, which many have assumed only to make themselves known in the world: let us judge how it will fare with us of Europe, by those who have taken titles upon them in Asia; for if the fame of those in Asia arrive not to the knowledge of us in Europe, no more shall ours in Europe to theirs in Asia.

The name of Echebar was thought by his subjects to be eternal, and that all the world did not only know, but fear him[a]; but ask here in Europe who he was, and no man hath heard of him; demand of the most learned, and few shall resolve you that he reigned in Mogor.

How few have heard of the name of Veneatapadino Ragium! He imagined that there was no man in the world who knew him not; how many can tell me, that he was the king of Narsinga? If, then, these warlike and potent princes are not known in Europe, no more shall Charles the Fifth, and many other excellent men in arms and literature, which have flourished in these parts, be known in Asia and Africa.

If we reflect upon the truth of those titles, which many arrogate unto themselves, we shall perceive them all to be vain. How many are called Highness, and Excellence, who are of base and abject spirit, and continue in mortal sin, which is the meanest and lowest thing in the world! how many are called Serenissimi, who have their understanding darkened, and their will perverted! Others call themselves Most Magnificent, with as much reason as Nero might be called Most Clement. The things wherein we have placed honour, make it most ridiculous; some think they should be valued and esteemed, because they are strong; not remembering, that a bear, a bull, or a sumpter-mule, is stronger than they: some, because they are richly clad, become

[a] Jarric. in Thesau. Indic.

mighty proud, and puffed up; not being ashamed to be more esteemed for the work of a mechanic tailor, than for their virtuous actions: others think to be honoured for their dishonours, bragging of their vices: others boast of the nobility of their blood, without looking upon virtue, and so make that a vice which was to oblige them to noble actions; converting that which was to be their honour, into infamy; valuing themselves more for being noble, than being virtuous and just.

A man is no greater than what he is in the eyes of God; and the estimation which God hath of us, is not for being born in a palace, but for being righteous and just: what an error is it, then, to value ourselves more for our human birth by which we are made sinners, than for our divine birth, by which we are made just? How foolish were he, who, being the son of a king and bond-woman, should esteem himself more for being the son of a slave, than of a monarch? More fool is he, who values more the nobility of his blood in being a gentleman, than the nobility of his soul in being a Christian; all honours of the earth are but splendid vanities; and those who seek after them, are like boys who hunt after butterflies: yet many souls have perished by them. If David cursed the mountains of Gilboa, because Saul and Jonathan died upon them; with much more reason may we curse the high mountains of honour, upon which so many souls have been sure to perish.

Let us consider what riches are, unto whom Gregory Nazianzen did much honour, when he called them a precious dung; truly in themselves they are not much better: "Gold and silver," said Antoninus the philosopher, "were nothing else than excrements and dregs of the earth; what are precious stones but shining pebbles: some red, some green?" &c.; silk, but the slaverings of worms? and the finest Holland, and the purest linen, but threads of certain plants? Other webs of esteem are made of hair of beasts; whereof, if we should meet one in our meat, it would make us loathe it; and many in their clothes are proud of them; furs, what are they but the skins of contemptible vermin? civet, but the sweat of a cat near its most noisome parts? amber, but the uncleanness of a whale; or something which the sea purges from it, as not worthy to be preserved? What are possessions,

palaces, cities, provinces, and spacious kingdoms? They are only toys of men, who, though old, are but children in esteeming so much of them. Lucian, beholding them not from the imperial heaven, but from the sphere of the moon, said, "All Greece possessed not above four fingers; and that Peloponnesus was not bigger than a lentil seed." To Seneca, the whole compass of the earth seemed but a point; and all the greatness thereof only matter of sport. Riches were invented for the ease and commodity of life; but as man hath made them, they serve for the greatest trouble and vexation: he who hath wealth, hath most want, because he not only needs for himself, but for all which he possesseth: so that he which hath a great house, hath the same necessities that his house hath, which are many; for a great house requires much furniture, and a large family; and so charges the master with multitudes of servants, great quantities of plate, hangings, and other ornaments superfluous to use and human commodity; insomuch as none are more poor than the rich; because they want, not only for themselves, but for all that is theirs: at least, riches want not this incommodity, that although they were invented for human use and ease, yet he that hath them in the greatest abundance, hath the greatest cares, troubles, dangers, and ever the greatest losses. Let us, therefore, while we have time, make over our riches; let us send them before us into another world; heaven stands open to receive them, we need not doubt of safe carriage; the carriers are very faithful and trusty, they are the poor and needy of this world; we make over unto them here, by way of exchange, a few things of little value; being to receive in heaven for them, an exceeding eternal weight of glory.

How narrow is the sphere of all our pleasures, which, besides the short time they endure, are mingled with wormwood of many pains and griefs? the adulterer, how many troubles and dangers does he usually pass, before he compass his desire? in the enjoying, what fears and suspicions assault him? and when it is past, (if he thinks seriously of his sin,) what remorse and repentance afflict him? And oftentimes, how many long diseases and sharp pains succeed that, which lasted but a moment? The several sorts of gusts, whereof the touch is capable, exceed not two or three, but the distinct

sorts of pains which afflict it, are without number; the greatest pleasure of the sense holds no comparison with the grief endured by the separation of a member; or the pain suffered by him who hath the stone, sciatica, or some violent disease in extremity.

What shall we say of the royal and imperial dignity, which seems, in human judgment, to embrace all the happiness of the world? Honours, riches, pleasures, all are contained in it; but how small is a kingdom, since the whole earth, in respect of the heavens, is no bigger than a point!

Look not upon the crown, but upon the tempest of cares which accompany it; fix not thy eyes upon the purple, but upon the mind of the king, more sad and dark than the purple itself; the diadem doth not more encompass his head, than cares and suspicions his soul: look not at the squadrons of his guards, but at the armies of his molestations which attend him; for nothing can be so full of cares as the palaces of kings: but it is far otherwise in heaven, the palace and house of God, where the just, without mixture or counterpoise of misery, are to enjoy those eternal.

If you look upon the so much esteemed greatness of this world; the brave palaces, renowned cities, large kingdoms; you may compare them to those little houses of sand or dirt, made by children for their entertainment; which men stand by and laugh at; and oftentimes, if their parents or masters find that it hinders them from learning of their lessons, they strike them down with their feet, and destroy that in a moment, which hath cost the boys much time and labour; so God useth to deal with those, who, neglecting his service, employ themselves in scraping together riches, enlarging their possessions, building of palaces, which he destroys with that ease, as if they were those little houses of sand, made by children; and certainly, more children are they, who set their hearts upon the greatness of this short life, than those who busy themselves in walls of dirt.

Esteem none for their exterior lustre and bravery; he must die as well as the most poor and unknown beggar; he must be buried, and at last appear before the just judgment; wherefore dost thou then value and admire those things which have no consistence, as if they were to last for ever?

If you look upon a table, where you behold painted a

rich and powerful man, and a poor contemptible beggar, you neither envy the one nor despise the other; because you know them to be shadows and no truths: the same judgment we ought to make of the things themselves; for all are but shadows, and little more than nothing: and as in a comedy or farce, it imports little who plays Alexander, and who the beggar, since all are equal when the play is done; so are all after death.

I will, therefore, from hence learn not to admire the grandeur of this world, nor to desire any thing in it; I have an inheritance in heaven, which none can take from me; there I have a mansion, not made by the hands of men; I will look after those eternal goods, which, by my faith and hope, I do now enjoy; they can never be taken from me, for they are the eternal inheritance of the just.

CHAPTER IV.

The Vanity of Man.

If we consider the greatest thing in nature, which is man, we shall see how vain and little he is, being temporal. What is man? saith Seneca. A frail vessel, broken with the least motion; a most weak body, naked by nature, and unarmed, subject to the injuries of fortune; composed of things infirm and fluid, and those very things, without which man cannot live, as smell, taste, meat, and drink, are mortal unto him. The wise Solon did not answer more favourably, when they demanded of him, What was man? "He is," saith he, "a corruption in his birth, a beast in his life, and food for worms when he is dead." He does things evil, which are not lawful; things filthy, which are not decent; things vain, which are not expedient: behold the plants and trees; they produce flowers, haws, and fruit; man, nothing but vermin and worms: they furnish us with oil, wine, and balsam; man affords nothing but phlegm and ordure: those send forth a fragrant odour, and man abominable stink: and such is man even in his youth and best time; but if he reach old age, which is esteemed as a felicity, his heart is afflicted, his head shakes, his spirits languish, his breath smells, his face

wrinkles, his stature bends, his eyes wax dim, his hands tremble, his hair falls, his ears grow deaf; neither is he more changed in body than in mind: an old man is easily displeased, hardly pacified, believes quickly, covetous, froward, still complaining, admires what is past, contemns what is present, sighs, grieves, languishes, and is always infirm.

Consider, also, wherein man ends; what thing more noisome than a human carcass? what more horrible than a dead man? he whose embraces were most acceptable when he was alive, even his sight is troublesome when he is dead; what do riches and honour profit him? they shall not free him from death, they shall not defend him from the worms, they shall not take away his stink and ill savour; he, who even now was seated in a glorious throne, is now flung into an obscure tomb; he, who lately feasted in a sumptuous sata, is now feasted upon by worms in a dark sepulchre; wherefore dost thou wax proud, dust and ashes, whose conception was in sin, whose birth in misery, whose life in pain, and whose death necessity? Wherefore dost thou swell, and adorn thy flesh with precious things, which, in a few days, is to be devoured by worms; and dost not rather adorn thy soul with good works, which is to be presented in heaven before God and his angels?

Besides that man is a thing so poor and mean, and composed of so base and vile materials; this vileness and meanness hath no firmness nor consistence, but is a river of changes, a perpetual corruption, and a fantasm of time; his nature, from his birth until his death, is unstable, mutable, and transitory; the more you consider it, the more it flies from you. The embryon, which is framed from seed, quickly becomes an infant; from thence a boy, from thence a young man, from thence an old, and then decrepit; and so the first age being past and corrupted by new ones which succeed, it comes at last to die: how ridiculous then are men to fear one death, who have already died so many, and are yet to die more? He never remains the same, but in every moment he changes, as it were, with various fantasms in one common matter; if he be still the same, how comes he to delight in things he did not before? He now loves and abhors after another manner than formerly; he now praises and dispraises other things than he did before, he uses other words, and is

moved with other affections; he doth not hold the same form, nor pass the same judgment he did; and how is it possible, that without change in himself, he should thus change in his motions and affections? Certainly, he who still changes, is not the same; and he who is not the same, cannot be said to be, but, in a continual mutation, slides away like water: where shall we then find true being, but in that only which is eternal, and knows no beginning; which is incorruptible, which is not changed with time?

Man is not only thus vile and base whilst he lives, and much more being dead; but even his soul, whilst it remains in his body, is not of much greater esteem; for although the soul be of itself of a most noble substance, yet his vices do so much vilify it, that he makes it more abominable than the body; and, without doubt, the soul, when it is dead in mortal sin, is more corrupt and stinking in the sight of the angels, than a body dead eight days ago; for if that body be full of worms, this is full of sins and vices; and if a man knew himself well, he would be more affrighted at the misery of his soul, than at that of his flesh.

Amongst all evils, man is the most evil; every beast hath an evil which is peculiar unto it, but man is all evils; the devil dares not approach a just man, but man dares despise him; man is compared to the beasts of the field: it is worse to be compared to a beast, than to be one; for it is no fault to be born an unreasonable creature; but to be endowed with reason, and to be compared to a beast, is a fault of the will, so as this untamed passion makes him worse than beasts.

What sorts of deaths and torments hath not human cruelty found out! what sorts of poison hath not the passion of man invented! Orpheus, Orus, Medisius, Hesiodotus, and other authors, have found out five hundred several ways of giving poison covertly, which have since been, to the calamity of man, wonderfully increased: nothing is now secure from the malice of man, since poison hath been given even in the shaking of hands, when men were to be reconciled and made friends: only in the sense of hearing, it hath not yet found a door to enter; all the rest of the senses it hath mastered: with the smell of a rose, with the sight of

a letter, with the touch of a thread, with the taste of a grape, death hath found an entrance.

And as though man were not miserable enough by nature, his very passions must contribute to make him wretched and unhappy; the proud man grieves and consumes for the felicity of another; the envious dies to see a happy man live; the covetous man loses his sleep for what he hath no need of; the choleric man ruins himself for what no ways concerns him: with reason did the prophet say, "In vain doth man trouble himself; he troubles himself, and before he attains rest, is overwhelmed; he mounts on high like a tempest; and like dust is scattered and disappears; he is kindled like a flame, and vanishes like smoke; he spreads himself as a cloud, and is contracted as a drop." He is troubled to gain the filth of riches, and a little dirt; his are the troubles, others' the joys; his are the cares, others' the contents; his are the curses, others' the respect and reverence. The life of man is full of vain labours, of vexatious thoughts, thinking how to obtain what he desires, and then how to keep it; after how to increase it, then how to defend it; and lastly how to enjoy it; and yet, in conclusion, all falls to pieces in the handling, and becomes nothing: what labour doth it cost the poor spider to weave his web, passing incessantly from one part to another; and often returning to the same place where he began, consuming himself with the threads drawn from his proper entrails, for the forming of his pavilion; which, with many journeys, having placed on high, and at last finished this goodly artifice, one touch of a broom defaces and brings to ground all his labour? Just such are the employments of man, of much toil, and of little profit; spending the most part of his time in useless projects, which, of themselves, fall to nothing, and, in the end, vanish without effect.

In vain doth man trouble himself, for he enjoys a life but lent him, and that but for a short time; man is but a debt of death, which is to be paid without delay. I have considered with tears what man was made of, what he is, and what he shall be. He was made of earth, and conceived in sin, and born for punishment: O unhappy condition of human nature! O the vanity and delusions of man! Thou

which gloriest in the strength of body, thou which embracest the gifts of fortune, and thinkest not thyself her servant, but her darling; see how thou mightest have perished, even before thou wert, with so little a thing as a snuff of a candle; and mayest yet with a smaller matter, pricked with the little tooth of an adder; or, like Anacreon, the poet, choaked with the stone of a grape; or, like Fabius, the Roman senator, suffocated with a hair in a draught of milk. The life of man, compared to the continuance of the world, is but a moment; and the world's continuance is but a moment in respect of eternity.

With good reason then is the life of man to be valued as nothing; since nothing is more frail, nothing more perishing; and, in conclusion, is little more than if it had no being at all. Glass, without violence, may last long; but the life of man ends of itself: Glass may, with care, be preserved for many ages; but nothing can preserve the life of man.

All this king David well understood, who was the most powerful and happy prince the Hebrews ever had; yet, when he considered that his greatness was to have an end, valued it as nothing; and not only esteemed his kingdoms and treasures as vanity, but even his life itself; wherefore he says, "Thou hast put, Lord, a measure unto my days, and my substance is as nothing[a]." All my kingdoms, all my trophies, all my treasures, all which I possess, all is nothing: and presently adds, "doubtless all is vanity;" all which living man is, all his whole life is vanity, and nothing that belongs to him so frail as himself.

O if we could but frame a true conception of the shortness of this life, how should we despise the pleasures of it! This is a matter of such importance, that God commanded the principal of his prophets, that he should go into the streets and market-places, and proclaim aloud, that "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flowers of the field;" for as the grass, which is cut in the morning, withers before night, and as the flower is quickly faded, so is the life of all flesh, the beauty and splendor of it withering in a day: he who shall look upon the frailty of our flesh, and that every

[a] Psal. xxxvii.

moment of an hour we increase and decrease without ever remaining in the same state; and even what we now speak, dictate, or write, flies away with some part of our life, will not doubt to say, "his flesh is grass, and the glory of it as the flower of the field:" he that was yesterday an infant, is now a boy, and will suddenly be a youth, and even until old age runs changing through uncertain conditions of life, and perceives himself first to be an old man, before he begins to admire that he is not still a boy; nay, seeing death seizeth upon others, yet he will not believe that it shall happen to him; and although he hear of it hourly, yet it appears unto him as a hidden mystery, which he cannot understand. God, therefore, commanded his prophet Isaiah, that he should proclaim it with a loud voice, as a thing of great importance, and that it might sink into the heart of man: receive, therefore, this truth from God himself, "All flesh is grass," all age is short, all time flies, all life vanishes; and a great multitude of years are but a great nothing.

Let us hear how true this is, from those who lived the longest, and have had the experience of what it is to live; perhaps thou mayest promise thyself to live a hundred years, as though this were a long life: hearken then unto holy Job, who lived two hundred and forty years, who knew best what it was to live; what says he of all his years? "My days," saith he, "are nothing;" nothing, he calls them, although they lasted almost three ages. In other places, he says the life of man is like the flower, which springs up to-day, and to-morrow is trodden under foot; and that it flies like a shadow, without ever remaining in the same state: how poor a thing then is life, since holy Job calls it but a shadow, though then three or four times longer than at present! Those who lived more than eight hundred years, esteemed their life but as a shadow; and in the instant when they died, judged they were scarce born. How can we think to live long in a time, wherein it is much to make the age of sixty years! A life then of eight hundred years being no more than the flirting up and down of a little sparrow, the flight of an arrow, or to say better, the passage of a shadow: what then are fifty years, unto which, perhaps, thou mayest attain? certainly the longest term whereunto human life extends, was compared by Homer, but unto the leaves of the

tree, which, at most, endure but a summer's season. Euripides judged that too much, and said, that human felicity was to be valued but at the length of a day: and Demetrius Phalereus allowed it but a moment's space. Consider, then, how vile are all things temporal, and how frail is all the glory of the world, being grounded upon so feeble a foundation: the goods of the earth can be no greater than is life, which give them their value; and if that be so poor and short, what shall they be? what good can be of value, which is sustained by a life so contemptible and full of misery? A figure of this was the statue of Nebuchadnezzar, which, although made of rich metal, as of gold and silver, yet was founded on feet of clay; so as a little stone falling upon it, overthrew it unto the earth. All the greatness and riches of the world have, for foundation, the life of him who enjoys them, which is so frail and slippery, that not a little stone, but even the grain of a grape hath been able to ruin and overthrow it.

I shall not, therefore, be ambitious of a rich mausoleum after my death, for the repose of my body; nor do I desire a stately sepulchre, a beautiful urn, or that my name or actions should be engraven in marble: I know this, that if I shall be miserable and unhappy hereafter, they will be but for my greater shame and reproach. Out of this life I can carry nothing but my good works; I will not add unto my evil ones that of vain glory; I will take heed whereon I set my heart; since the accomplishing of what I wish, may be a punishment of my desires; if those things of the earth which I most love and desire should continue, if they be taken from me, it is a chastisement of my earthly affection; and if I be permitted to enjoy them, I am fearful that they may be the temporal reward of some good work, which may either diminish or deprive me of the eternal.

CHAP. V.

The Miseries of Temporal Life.

If man, before he was born, knew what he was to suffer in his life, he would not be born at all; therefore, Silenus being

demanded what was the greatest happiness man was capable of, said, 'Not to be born, or die quickly.' With reason did Democritus say, That the life of man was most miserable, since those who seek for good, hardly find it, and evil comes of itself, and enters our gates unsought for: insomuch as our life is always exposed unto innumerable dangers, injuries, losses, and to so many infirmities, that, according to Pliny and many physicians, Greeks and Arabians, there were more than thirty several sorts of new diseases discovered in the space of few years; and now every day finds out others, and some so cruel, that they are not to be named without horror; and the malice of the disease is not greater than many times the remedies strange. Some have been cured by cauterizing with fire, by sawing off a member, by trepanizing the scull, or drawing bones from it; others have been cured with the opening of the belly, and drawing forth the guts. Above all, the cure of Palæologus II., emperor of Constantinople, was most cruel, whose infirmity, after a year's continuance, found no other remedy but to be continually vexed and displeased; his wife and servants, who most desired his health, having no ways to restore it, but by disobedience, still crossing and opposing him in what he most desired: a harsh cure for a prince! If remedies be so great evils, what are the infirmities? The sickness of Mæcenas was so strange, that he slept not, nor closed his eyes in three whole years. That of king Antiochus was so pestilential, that his loathsome smell infected his whole army, and his body flowed with lice and vermin. Consider here the end of majesty, when the greatest power of earth cannot defend itself against so noisome and contemptible an enemy. In the same manner Feretrina, queen of the Barcæans, all the flesh of her body turned into maggots and grubs, which, swarming every where, at last consumed her. Some have had serpents bred in their arms and thighs, which have devoured their flesh even whilst they lived. With reason, then, does man enter into the world with tears, as divining the many miseries which he shall have time enough to suffer, but not to lament; and, therefore, begins to weep so early. All the days of man are full of grief and misery.

What shall I say of those strange pestilential distempers, which have destroyed whole cities and provinces? In many

places it hath raged with such fury, as if it meant to extirpate all mankind; so many thousands of people having died, that whole towns and countries have remained desert. The evil hath been many times so great, that fathers forsook their children, and women their husbands; riches did not preserve them from dying of hunger; if they found by chance what to eat, the fury of the distemper was such, as they often died with the morsel in their mouths. To all this, is human life subject. Let those, therefore, who are in health and jollity, fear what may befall them.

Famine is no less a misery of man's life, than pestilence, which not only particular persons, but whole provinces, have often suffered; many times people, when they had nothing left them to eat, have fed on horses, dogs, cats, rats, dormice, and other vermin, when they could lay hold on them; and when those failed, ate one another; nay, fathers spared not their sons, nor women those whom they brought forth; and many would willingly have pawned their bowels, to have had wherewith to feed them. What a horrid prospect is it, to see a company of people appearing in the streets more like unto ghosts and phantoms than living men! others stretched upon the ground half dead, and ready to draw the last gasp! What pity is it to behold thousands of women, feeble, pale, and hunger-starved, charged with a great number of their poor languishing infants, which, dried up with hunger, could not so much as weep, or demand succour from their sorrowful and afflicted mothers; who could only help them with their compassionate looks, of which rivers of tears, which ran from their eyes, were a sufficient witness! This is a lamentable scene of a most miserable tragedy! All those miseries which fall not under imagination, are found in the life of man.

Greater than all these calamities is that of war, which, of the three scourges of God, wherewith he uses to chastise kingdoms, is the most terrible; as well because it is commonly followed by the other two, as for that it brings along with it greater punishments; and which is worse, greater sins, whereof plagues are free, in which all endeavour to be reconciled with God; and even those who are in health, dispose themselves for death. Famine also, though it brings with it some sins, yet it lessens others; though it be accompanied

with many thefts, yet it suits not so much with pride and vanity; neither doth it permit so many sorts of vices as are occasioned by war.

Above all, the greatest calamities of man's life are not pestilence, famine, or war, but human passions not subordinate to reason: what did David suffer from the envy of Saul? exile, hunger, dangers, and war. Naboth sooner lost his life by the covetousness of Ahab, than he could have done by a plague. Elias was more afflicted with the desire of revenge in Jezebel, than if he had had the pestilence; for that made him weary of his life, and this would but have made him weary of his disease. What plagues or wars were like the ambition of Herod, which destroyed so many thousand children? What contagion was more mortal than the cruelty of Nero and other tyrants, who took away the lives of so many innocent people, to satisfy their fears or fancies?

Who is so happy to content all, and be envied of none? Who is so esteemed that some do not despise him? Who is so general a well-doer, that nobody complains of him? The Athenians found fault with their Simonides, because he talked too loud. The Thebans accused Panniculus, that he spit too much. The Carthaginians spake ill of Hannibal, because he went open-breasted, with his stomach bare. Others laughed at Julius Cæsar, because he was ill girt. There is none so upright, in whom envy will not find something to reprehend.

So many are the miseries of life, that they cannot all be numbered. Death, which is thought by some the greatest of evils, is, by many, esteemed a lesser evil than life; the many evils in this, surpassing the greatness of the evil in that: and, therefore, some have conceived it is better to suffer the greatest, which is death, than to suffer so many, though lesser, which are in life: for this reason, one calls death the last and greatest physician, because, though in itself it be the greatest evil, yet it cures all others; and, therefore, prescribes the hopes of it, as an efficacious remedy and comfort in the afflictions of life.

What security can there be in life, when the earth, which is the mother of the living, is unfaithful to them, and sprouts out miseries and deaths, even of whole cities? What can be secure in the world, if the world itself be not, and the most

solid parts of it shake? If that which is only immoveable and fixed for to sustain the living, tremble with earthquakes; if what is proper to the earth, which is to be firm, be unstable and betray us; where shall our fears find a refuge? When the roof of the house shakes, we may fly into the fields; but when the earth shakes, whither shall we go?

In the time of the plague we may change places; but from the whole earth who can fly? and so from dangers: and, therefore, not to have a remedy, may secure us as a comfort in our evils; for fear is foolish without hope. Reason banishes fear in those who are wise, and in those who are not. Despair of remedy gives a kind of security, at least takes away fear. He that will fear nothing, let him think all things are to be feared. See what slight things endanger us; even those which sustain life, lay ambushes for us. Meat and drink, without which we cannot live, take away our lives. It is not wisdom, therefore, to fear swallowing by an earthquake, and not to fear the falling of a tile. In death, all sorts of dyings are equal. What imports it, whether one single stone kills thee, or a whole mountain oppress thee? Death consists in the soul's leaving of the body, which often happens by slight accidents.

Wonderful are the ways by which death finds us out, and most poor and contemptible those things, upon which life depends; it hangs not upon a thread, but sometimes upon so small a thing as a hair. No door is shut to death; it enters where the air cannot enter, and encounters us in the very action of life. Small things are able to deprive us of so great a good! A little grain of a grape took away the life of Anacreon. The affections of the soul, and the pleasures of the body, become the highway unto death. Homer died of grief, and Sophocles of an excess of joy; Dionysius was killed with the good news of a victory, which he had obtained; Aurelianus died dancing; Cornelius Gallus, and Titus Etherius, died in the act of lust.

Let no man assure himself of that life, which hath so many entrances for death. Let no man say, 'I shall not die to-day;' for many have thought so, and yet suddenly died that very hour. By so inconsiderable things, as we have said, have many died; and thou mayest die without any of them; for sudden death, there is no need of a hair, or excess

of grief, or sudden joy to surprise thee: it may happen without any of those exterior causes. A corrupt humour in the entrails, which flies unto the heart without any body's perceiving it, is sufficient to make an end of thee; and it is to be admired that no more die suddenly, considering the disorders of our life, and the frailties of our bodies. We are not of iron or brass, but of soft and delicate flesh. A clock, though of hard metal, in time wears out, and every hour needs mending; and breaking of one wheel stops the motions of all the rest. There is more artifice in a human body than in a clock; and it is much more delicate; the nerves are not of steel, nor the veins of brass, nor the entrails of iron. How many have had their livers or spleens corrupted or displaced, and have died suddenly! No man sees what he hath within his body; and such may his infirmity be, although he thinks and feels himself well, yet he may die within an hour. Let us all tremble at what may happen!

But Christians, in all the miseries and dangers of human life, have great comforts to lay hold on; which are, a good conscience, hope of glory, conformity unto the Divine will, and the imitation and example of Jesus Christ. From these four he shall in life have happiness, in death security, in both comfort, and in eternity a reward.

We may draw from what hath been said, how unjust was the complaint of Theophrastus, that nature hath given a longer life unto many birds and beasts, than unto man. If our life were less troublesome, he had some reason; but it being so fraught with miseries, he might rather think that life the happiest, which was shortest; wherefore it is better to die young, and die well, than to die old, and die ill. This voyage being of necessity, the felicity of it consists not in being long, but being prosperous; and that, at the last, we arrive in the desired port. Therefore, supposing so many miseries, we cannot complain of God for having given us a short life, but of ourselves for having made it a bad one; our life being compassed with so many miseries, as that death seems rather a shelter for evils, than a punishment. God was pleased that it should be short, that the vexations and misfortunes of it, which cannot be counterpoised with any joys of the earth, might be more supportable. At least, if this life, with so many miseries, do not displease us; yet let

the eternal, with all its felicities, content us better; and let us not endeavour less for the immortal life in heaven, than we do for this mortal on earth. Let us keep always in mind the years of eternity; so whatsoever adversity or affliction happen, we shall more easily bear it. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory[a]."

Therefore, if the world frown upon me; if I meet with many troubles and afflictions; if misfortunes befall me; if they rush upon me like waves, one on the neck of another; if I be tossed up and down; then these shall be my daily thoughts: Well, let the world have its course, I am content to bear it; God's will be done; let the sea be troubled, let the waves thereof roar, let the winds of afflictions blow, let the waters of sorrows rush upon me, let the darkness of grief and heaviness compass me about, yet will I not be afraid: these storms will blow over, these winds will be laid, these waves will fall, this tempest cannot last long, and these clouds shall be dispelled. Whatsoever I suffer here, shall shortly have an end; I shall not suffer eternally; come the worst that can come, death will put an end to all my sorrows and miseries; "Domine, da mihi modo patientiam, et postea indulgentiam; Lord, grant me patience here, and ease hereafter." I will suffer patiently whatsoever can happen, and shall endeavour to do nothing against my conscience, and displeasing unto thee; for all is safe and sure with him, who is certain and sure of blessed eternity.

CHAP. VI.

The End of Temporal Life.

If the end of life should fall under our election, and that it were in the power of man to make choice how many years he would continue in life, and after what manner he would have it, and that it might conclude some other way than by death; yet the consideration that it, and all things temporal, were to perish, and at last to have an end, were sufficient to

[a] 2 Cor. iv. 17.

make us despise it; and that very thought would drown all the pleasures and contents which it could afford us: for as all things are of greater and lesser esteem, according to the length and shortness of their duration; so life being to end, be it in what manner soever, is much to be disvalued. A fair vessel of crystal, if it were as consistent and durable as gold, were more precious than gold itself; but being frail, and subject to break, it loses its estimation; and although of itself it might last long, yet being capable, by some careless mischance, of being broken, it becomes of much less value. In the same manner, our life, which is much more frail than glass, being subject to perish by a thousand accidents; and though none of them should happen, could not long continue, since it consumes itself; it must needs, together with those temporal goods which attend it, be most contemptible: but, considering that the ending of it is by the way of death, infirmities and misfortunes, which are the harbingers, and prepare the way for death; it is to be admired, that man, who knows he is to die, makes an account of temporal felicity, seeing the misery in which the prosperity of this world, and the majesty of the greatest monarchs, are at last to finish.

Let us consider king Antiochus, lord of so many provinces, in all his pomp and glory, glittering in gold, and dazzling the eyes of the beholders with the splendour of his diamonds and precious jewels; mounted upon a stately courser, commanding over numerous armies, and making the very earth tremble under him. Let us then behold him in his bed, pale and wan, his strength and spirit spent, his loathsome body flowing with worms and corruption; forsaken by his own people, by reason of his poisonous stink, which infected his whole camp; and, finally, dying mad, and in rage. Who, seeing such a death, would wish the felicity of his life? Who, with the condition of his misery, would desire his fortune? See, then, wherein the goods of this life conclude.

Who could have known Cæsar, who had first seen him triumph over the conquered world, and then behold him gasping for a little breath, and weltering in his own blood, which flowed from twenty-three wounds, opened by so many stabs?

Who could believe it was the same Cyrus; he who subdued the Medes, conquered the Assyrians, and Chaldean empire; he who amazed the world with thirty years' success of continued victories, now taken prisoner, and put to an ignominious death by the command of a woman?

Who could think it were the same Alexander, who in so short a time subjugated the Persians, Indians, and the best part of the known world; and should after behold him conquered by a calenture, feeble, exhausted in body, dejected, in spirit, dried up, and parched with thirst, without taste in his mouth, or content in his life; his eyes sunk, his nose sharp, his tongue cleaving to his palate, not being able to pronounce one word? What amazement is it, that the heat of a poor fever should consume the mightiest power and fortune of the world; and that the greatest of temporal and human prosperities should be drowned by the overflowing of one irregular and inordinate humour! How great a monster is human life, since it consists of so disproportionable parts; the uncertain felicity of our whole life ending in a most certain misery!

Who would marry a woman, though of a comely and well-proportionate body, who had the head of an ugly dragon? Certainly, although she had a great dowry, none would covet such a bed-fellow. Wherefore do we wed ourselves unto this life, which, although it seems to carry along with it much content and happiness, yet is it in effect no less a monster; since, though the body appear unto us beautiful and pleasant, yet the end of it is horrible and full of misery.

Let no man flatter himself with the vigour of his health, with the abundance of his riches, with the splendour of his authority, with the greatness of his fortune: for by how much he is more fortunate, by so much shall he be more miserable, since his whole life is to end in misery.

Let no man be deceived in beholding the prosperity of a rich man; let him not measure his felicity by what he sees at present, but by the end, wherein he shall conclude; not by the sumptuousness of his palaces, nor by the multitude of his servants, nor by the bravery of his apparel, nor by the lustre of his dignity; but let him expect the end of that which he so much admires; and he shall then perceive him at best to die in his bed, dejected, dismayed, and struggling with the pangs and anxieties of death. If he comes so off, it is well;

otherwise the daggers of his enemy, the teeth of some wild beast, or a tile thrown upon his head by some violent wind, may serve to make an end of him, when he least thinks of it. O how great a madness is it to glory in any thing on this side heaven! The estate of the most powerful is subject to most impetuous storms, whose end is to be sunk and overthrown. O how wavering and uncertain is the height of the greatest honour! False is the hope of man, and vain is all his glory! O uncertain life, due unto perpetual toil and labour! What doth it now profit thee, to have raised so many costly palaces of marble, when thou now must die? O how many things dost thou now think of doing, not knowing the bitterness of their end? Thou beholdest thy friend now dying; and know, that thou also shalt quickly follow him.

Let us forbear to look upon those several kinds of death, which are incident to human nature; let us consider that which is esteemed the most happy; when we die not suddenly, or by violence, but by some infirmity, which leisurely makes an end of us; or by a pure resolution, which naturally brings death along with it. What greater misery of man's life than this, that death should be accounted happy; not that it is so, but because it is less miserable than others? For what grief and sorrow doth not he pass, who dies in this manner? How do the accidents of his infirmities afflict him? The heat of his fever, which scorches his entrails; the thirst of his mouth, which suffers him not to speak; the pain of his head, which hinders his attention; the sadness of his heart, proceeding from the apprehension that he is to die; besides other grievous accidents, which are usually more in number than a human body hath members to suffer; together with remedies, which are no less painful than the evils themselves. To this, add the uncertainty whither he is to go; to heaven or hell. What news can be more terrible unto a sinner, than that he is to die; to leave all his pleasure in death, and to give an account unto God for his life past? If lots were to be cast, whether one should have his flesh plucked off with burning pincers, or be made a king; with what fear and anxiety of mind would that man expect the issue? How then shall he look, who, in the agony of death, wrestles with eternity, and, within two hours' space, looks for glory or

torments without end? What life can be counted happy, if that be happy which ends with so much misery? If we will not believe this, let us ask him, who is now passing the terrors of death, what his opinion of life is; let us now inquire of him, when he lies with his breast sticking forth, his eyes sunk, his feet dead, his knees cold, his visage pale, his pulses without motion. What will this man say his life was, but by how much more prosperous, by so much more vain; and that all his felicity was false and deceitful, since it came to conclude in such a period? What would he now take for all the honours of this world? Certainly, I believe, he would part with them at an easy rate; nay, if they have been offensive to God Almighty, he would give all in his power he never had enjoyed them.

He who, unto the hour of his death, hath enjoyed all the delights the world can give him, at that hour what remains with him? Nothing; or if any thing, a greater grief. Consider of how little substance all temporal things will appear, when thou shalt be in the light eternal. The honours which they have given thee, shall be no more thine; the pleasures, wherein thou hast delighted, can be no more thine; thy riches are to be another's. See, then, whether the happiness of this life, which is not so long as life itself, be of that value, that for it we should part with eternal felicity.

I beseech thee, ponder what is life, and what is death. Life is the passing of a shadow, short, troublesome, and dangerous; a place which God hath given us in time, for the desiring of eternity.

Consider why God leads us about in the circuit of this life, when he might, at the first instance, have placed us in heaven. Was it that we should spend our time idly, and daily invent new chimeras, of vain and frivolous honours? No, certainly, it was not; but that, by virtuous actions, we might gain heaven, show what we owe unto our Creator, and, in the midst of the troubles and afflictions of this life, discover how loyal and faithful we are unto our God. For this he placed us in the lists, that we should take his part, and defend his honour; for this he entered us into this militia and warfare, (for the life of man is a warfare upon earth,) that here we might fight for him, and, in the midst of his and our enemies, show how true and faithful we are to him,

Were it fit that a soldier, in the time of battle, should stand disarmed, passing away his time at dice upon a drum-head? This doth he who seeks his ease in this life, and sets his affections upon things of the earth; not endeavouring those of heaven, nor thinking upon death, where he is to end.

A peregrination is this life; and what passenger is so besotted with the pleasures of the way, that he forgets the place whither he is to go? How camest thou, then, to forget death, whither thou travellest with speed; and canst not, though thou desirest, rest one small minute by the way? For time, although against thy will, will draw thee along with it. The way of this life is not voluntary, like that of travellers; but necessary, like that of condemned persons, from the prison unto the place of execution. To death thou standest condemned, whither thou art now going; how canst thou laugh?

A malefactor, after sentence past, is surprised with the apprehension of death, that he thinks of nothing but dying. We are all condemned to die; how come we, then, to rejoice in these things, which we are to leave so suddenly?

Death is compared unto a thief, who not only robs us of our treasure and substance, but bereaves us of our lives. Since, therefore, thou art to leave all, why dost thou load thyself in vain? What merchant, knowing that so soon as he arrived unto the port, his ship and goods should be sunk, would charge his vessel with much merchandise? Arriving at death, thou, and all thou hast, are to sink and perish; why dost thou, then, burden thyself with that which is not needful, but rather a hinderance to thy salvation?

This is the salary, which the goods of the earth bestow on those who serve them; that if they do not leave or ruin them before their death, they are then certain at least to leave them, and often hazard the salvation of those that dote upon them. O vain man! this short life is bestowed upon thee for gaining the goods of heaven, which are to last eternally; and you spend it in seeking those of the earth, which are to perish instantly.

Besides all this, though one should die the most happy death that can be imagined, yet behold the dead body; how ugly and noisome doth the miserable carcass remain, that even friends fly from it, and scarce dare stay one night alone

with it: the nearest and most obliged kindred procure it in all haste to be carried forth a-doors; and, having wrapped it in some coarse sheet, throw it into the grave, and within two days forget it. And he, who in life could not be contained in great and sumptuous palaces, is now content with the narrow lodging of seven foot of earth; he, who used to lodge in rich and dainty beds, hath for his couch the hard ground; for his mattress, moths; and for his covering, worms; his pillows, at best the bones of other dead persons; then heaping upon him a little earth, and perhaps a grave-stone, they leave his flesh to be feasted upon by worms, whilst his heirs triumph in his riches.

He who gloried in the exercise of arms, and was used to revel at balls, is now stiff and cold, his hands and feet without motion, and all his senses without life; he who with his power and pride trampled upon all, is now trod under foot by all; consider him eight days dead, drawn from his grave, how ghastly and horrible a spectacle he will appear! Behold then what thou pamperest, a body, which, perhaps within four days, may be eaten by loathsome vermin: whereon dost thou found thy vain pretensions, which are but castles in the air, founded upon a little earth, which turning into dust, the whole fabric falls to the ground. See where all human greatness concludes; and that the end of man is no less loathsome and miserable than his beginning!

The memory of the loathsomeness of a dead body may serve to make us to despise the beauty of that which is living; therefore, if, at any time, thou shalt be surprised with the temptation of the frail beauty of the flesh, send thy thoughts presently unto the sepulchre of the dead, and let them there see what they can find agreeable to the touch, or pleasing to the sight. Consider that dust and dry ashes were once soft and lively flesh, and, in its youth, was subject to the like passions as thou art. Consider those rigid nerves, those naked teeth, the disjointed disposition of the bones and arteries, and that horrible dissipation of the whole body; by this means thou mayest take from thy heart those vain deceits and illusions.

All this is certainly to happen unto thyself; wherefore dost thou not amend thy evil conditions? This is to be thy end; unto this, therefore, direct thy life and actions. With

reason had the Brahmins their sepulchres still placed open before their doors, that, by the memory of death, they might learn to live. Wisdom is the meditation of death; therefore ever have in thy thoughts that meditation, "Remember, thou art to die."

Therefore, whatsoever misery or affliction shall fall upon thee, say, "By the Divine assistance, I will bear it patiently; Lord Jesu, stand by me, and comfort me: Lord Jesu, be present with thy servant, that putteth his trust in thee; receive my spirit, and lead me through the valley and shadow of death; lead me, and forsake me not, until thou hast brought my soul into the land of the living, O thou which art my light, life, and salvation!"

CHAP. VII.

Of Death, and the Certainty of it.

Besides the misery wherein all the felicity of this world is to determine, there are other considerations of the end of our life to be considered; by which we may perceive, how vain and contemptible are all the goods of it. We will principally speak of three.

1. That death is most certain, and no ways to be avoided.

2. That the time is most uncertain; because we know neither when, or how it will happen.

3. That it is but only one, and but once to be experienced; so that we cannot, by a second death, correct the errors of the first.

Concerning the certainty of death, it imports us much to persuade ourselves of it; for, as it is infallible that the other life shall be without end, so it is as certain that this shall have it. God hath not made a law more inviolable than that of death; thou art to die, assure thyself of that; an irrevocable law is this; and, without remedy, thou must die. I pray, tell me, where is Adam now? where is Cain? where is long-lived Methusaleh? where is Noah? where is Shem? where is Abraham? where is Jacob? They are dead and

gone, their time is past; we may say of them, "Vixerunt, fuerunt Tröes;" once they were, now they are not: and be assured, that "mortuus est" shall be every man's epitaph; for "we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground[a]."

The time will come, when those eyes, with which thou readest this, shall be burst, and lose their sight; those hands which thou now employest, be without sense or motion; this mouth, which now discourses, shall be mute, without breath or spirit; and this flesh, which thou now pamperest, shall be consumed and eaten by worms and vermin; the time will come, when thou shalt be covered with earth, thy body stink and rot; the time will come, when thou shalt be forgotten as if thou never hadst been, and those that pass, shall walk over thee, without remembering that such a man was born. Consider this, and persuade thyself, that thou must die as well as others; that which hath happened to so many, must happen also to thee; think upon this seriously, and reflect with thyself soberly, how thou shalt look when thou art dead; and this consideration will give thee a great knowledge what thy life is, and make thee despise the pleasures of it.

If death were only contingent, and not certain, yet because it might happen, it ought to make us very careful and solicitous. If God should say, that only one of all those in the world should die, but did not declare who that one were, yet all would fear: why, then, dost thou not now fear, when all men must infallibly die, and perhaps thou the first?

Now is the bow drawn; now the arrow let loose, and already in the way to hit thee; why dost thou strive to shun it, and dost not rather humble and prepare thyself to receive it? If one should tell thee, that a whole tire of artillery were immediately to be discharged at thee, and no way left to avoid the strokes; how wouldst thou be amazed? but if thou perceivedst that fire were already given, the very noise perhaps would kill thee; know then, that the artillery of death with much more fury is already shot, and there is no quarter of an hour, wherein it flies not more than ten millions of leagues to overtake thee, and yet from whence it parted, and where it now is, thou knowest not; wert thou certain it were far off,

[a] 2 Sam. xiv. 14.

yet it runs with so precipitate a course, that it will not fail in a short time to reach thee. Therefore, thou being ignorant at what distance it is, thou oughtest every moment to expect it, since every moment it may be with thee.

Let every man therefore say within himself: It is I who am to die, and resolve into dust; I have nothing to do with this world; the other was made for me, and I am only to care for that; in this I am only a passenger, and am therefore to look upon the eternal, whither I am going, and am there to make my abode for ever; certain it is, that death will come and hurry me along with him; all the business therefore I have now, is to dispose myself for so hard an encounter; and since it is not in the power of man to free me from it, I will only serve the Lord, who is able to save me in so certain and imminent a danger.

2. As it is most certain that we are to die, so it is most uncertain when, or in what manner we shall die: who knows whether he is to die in his old age, or in his youth; if by sickness, or struck by a thunderbolt; if a year hence, or to-day? The doors of death are ever open; and the enemy continually lies in ambush, and, when we least think of him, will assault us.

He who suspected that thieves were to enter his house, would wake all night, because they should find him at no hour unprovided; it being, then, not a suspicion, but an apparent certainty, that death will come, and we know not when, why do we not always watch? We are in a continual danger, and therefore ought to be continually prepared: it is good ever to have our accounts made with God, since we know not but he may call us in such haste as we shall have no time to perfect them; it is good to play a sure game, and be ever in the grace of God.

Who would not tremble to hang over some vast precipice, wherein if he fell, he were certain to be dashed in a thousand pieces, and that by so weak a supporter as a thread? This, or, in truth, much greater, is the danger of him, who is in mortal sin, who hangs over hell by the thread of life, a twist so delicate, that not a knife, but the wind, and the least fit of sickness, breaks it: wonderful is the danger where he stands, who continues but one minute in mortal sin. Death hath time enough to shoot his arrow, in the speaking of a word;

the twinkling of an eye suffices; who can be pleased whilst he stands naked and disarmed in the midst of his enemies? Amongst as many enemies is man as there are ways to death, which are innumerable; it is not then safe for man to be disarmed and naked of the grace of God, in the midst of so many adversaries and dangers of death, which hourly threaten him. What person, being led to execution, would entertain himself by the way with vain conceits? We are condemned persons, who are going to execution, though by different ways, which we ourselves know not, some the straight way, and some by by-paths, but are all sure to meet in death; we ought therefore still to be prepared, and free from the distracting pleasures of this life, for fear we fall suddenly; this danger of sudden death is sufficient to make us distaste all the delights of the earth.

Death is therefore uncertain, that thou shouldest be ever certain to despise this life, and dispose thyself for the other; thou art every hour in danger of death, to the end, that thou shouldest be every hour prepared to have life; what is death but the way unto eternity? A great journey thou hast to make; wherefore dost thou not provide in time? and the rather, because thou knowest not how soon thou mayest be forced to depart. Who is there, who does not desire to have served God faithfully two years, before death should take him? If, then, thou art not sure of one, why dost thou not begin? Trust not in thy health or youth, for death steals treacherously upon us, when we least look for it; promise not thyself to-morrow, for thou knowest not whether death will come to-night.

Since, then, thou knowest not when thou art to die, think thou must die to-day; and be ever prepared for that which may ever happen; trust in the mercies of God, and implore them incessantly; but presume not to defer thy conversion for a moment; for who knows whether thou shalt ever from henceforward have time to call upon him? and having called upon him, whether thou shalt be heard? To what purpose defer we that until to-morrow, which imports so much to be done to-day, and perhaps will not be to-morrow, if not to-day? It was a very good answer that Messodamus gave one, inviting him to a feast the next day: "My friend," saith he, "why dost thou invite me against

to-morrow? I durst not, for these many years, secure myself that I should live one day; for I have expected death every hour." No man is sufficiently armed against death, unless he be always prepared to entertain it.

3. To this uncertainty of death is to be added that of being only one, and only once to be tried; so as the error of dying ill cannot be amended by dying well another time. God gave unto man his senses and other parts of his body double; he gave him two eyes, that, if one failed, he might serve himself of the other; he gave him two hands, that, if one were lost, yet he might not wholly be disabled; but of deaths he gave but one; and, if that one miscarry, all is ruined. A terrible case, that the thing which most imports us, which is to die, hath neither trial, experience, nor remedy; it is but only once to be acted, and that in an instant, and upon that instant all eternity depends, in which if we fail, the error is never to be amended.

If an ignorant peasant, who had never drawn a bow, should be commanded to shoot at a mark far distant, upon condition that, if he hit it, he should be highly rewarded with many rich gifts; but if he missed it, and that at the first shoot, he should be burnt alive, in what straits would this poor man find himself! how perplexed that he should be forced upon a thing of that difficulty wherein he had no skill, and that the failing should cost him so dear as his life; but especially that it was to be only once to be assayed, without possibility of repairing the first fault by a second trial! This is our case: I know not how we are so pleasant; we have never died, we have no experience or skill in a thing of so great difficulty; we are only once to die, and in that all is at stake; either eternity of torments in hell, or of happiness in heaven: how live we then so careless of dying well, since for it we were born, and are but once to try it? This action is the most important of all our life; upon it depends eternity; and, if missed, without repair or amendment. These human actions which may be repeated, if one miss, the other may hit; and that which is lost in one way, may be regained in another. If a rich merchant had this year a ship sunk in the ocean, another may arrive laden with such riches as may recompense the loss of the former; but if we once fail in death, the loss is never to be repaired.

That which is but only one, is worthy of more care and esteem, because the loss of it is irreparable; let us then value the time of this life, since there is no other given wherein to gain eternity.

A certain soldier being called in question by Lamachus, a centurion, for some misdemeanour or other committed in the camp, earnestly desired pardon for that once, and promised never to offend in the like again. But the centurion made him this answer: "In bello, bone vir, non licebit bis peccare; O sir! know you thus much, there is no offending in war twice." But in death, alas! there is no offending once; there is no hope of pardon; once dead, and always dead; he that dies once ill, is damned for ever; there is no returning again to rise, to amend what is done amiss; as death leaves a man, so judgment finds him; and as judgment leaves him, so eternity findeth him.

If a man were obliged to leap some great and desperate leap, upon condition, that, if he performed it well, he should be made master of a wealthy kingdom; but if ill, he should be chained to an oar, and made a perpetual galley-slave; without doubt this man would use much diligence in preparing himself for so hazardous an undertaking, and would often practise before an action of so great consequence, from which he expected so different fortunes. How far more different are those, which we expect from so great a leap as is from life to death; since the kingdoms of the earth, compared with that of heaven, are trash, rubbish; and the tugging at an oar, in the gallies, compared with hell, a glory. When the leap is great and dangerous, he who is to leap it, uses to fetch his career backwards, that he may leap further, and with greater force: we, therefore, knowing the danger of the leap from life to death, that we may perform it better, ought to fetch our career far back, even from the beginning of our short life; and from our first use of reason, from which we shall know, that the life we live is mortal, that at the end of it we have a great debt to pay, and that we are to discharge both use and principle, when we least think of it.

It was the saying of Iphicrates, That it is a shame for an emperor at any time to say with the fool, "Non putâram, I did not think it;" but it is a greater shame for a Christian man to say, "Non putâram," I did not think there had been

such a difference between a godly and wicked life; I did not think eternity was to follow after this life; I did not think I should have died so suddenly.

Let us therefore husband time in which we may gain eternity, which being once lost, we shall lose both the time of this life, and the eternity of the other. How many millions are now in hell, who, whilst they were in this world, despised time, and would now be content to suffer, thousands of years, all the torments of the damned, for the redemption of one instant, in which they might, by repentance, recover the eternal life of glory, which is now lost without remedy! And yet thou castest away not only instants, but hours, days, and years! Consider what a damned person would give for some part of that time which thou losest; and take heed that thou hereafter, when there shall be no repair of that time, which thou now so vainly mispendest, be not thyself in the same grief and bitterness.

We are now upon the stage, therefore we may act on our part; we have to deal with potent enemies, therefore we must be always prepared to fight; we are still in our race, therefore we must hold out to the last; let us then so act our parts, that the angels may rejoice to be spectators; let us so fight, that we may win the crown; let us so run, that we may obtain.

Consider how by time thou mayest gain eternity: look not then upon the loss of it, as upon the loss of time, but of eternity; endeavour then, whilst it lasts, to get a good bargain; for this life once past, there is no more occasion for traffic, the time appointed for storing up is but short; but the gain and profit is eternal: therefore leave the cares of this world, and elevate your whole heart and affections unto heaven, and there place your thoughts, which are to be upright and settled, in God Almighty.

I know, O Lord, I am here but as a sojourner in a strange land[a], and not as a citizen in my own country. I am here but a tenant at will, and must shortly depart; for here I have no continuing city; but I must seek one to come, eternal in the heaven; where I shall bear a part in the heavenly quire with angels, evermore praising thy holy

[a] Heb. xiii. 14.

name; there I shall behold light incomprehensible; where I shall be in no fear of death. Farewell, then, all the world, and all the things in it; "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done;" and welcome to me, thou art welcome eternally, O beloved, eternally thou art welcome; now I am blessed, O Lord, for I shall dwell in thy house, and shall still be praising thee[a].

CHAP. VIII.

Of that Moment wherein we are to die, and Life to end.

We ought seriously to consider all which is to pass in that moment of death, for which the time of this life was only bestowed upon us; and upon which depends the eternity of the other. O most dreadful point, which art the end of time, and beginning of eternity! O most fearful instant, which shuttest up the prefixed term of this life, and determinest the business of our salvation! how many things are to pass in thee? In the same instant life is to finish, all our works to be examined; and that sentence given, which is to be executed for all eternity. O last moment of life! O first of eternity! how terrible is the thought of thee, since in thee not only life is to be lost, but to be accounted for, and we then to enter into a region which we know not; in that moment I shall cease to live, in that moment I shall behold my Judge, who shall lay all my sins open before me, with all their weight, number, and enormity. In it I shall receive a strict charge of all the Divine benefits bestowed upon me; and in it a judgment shall pass upon me, either for my salvation, or damnation eternal! How wonderful is it, that for so many matters, and of so great importance, there is no more time allotted than the space of an instant; no place left for reply, intercession of friends, or appeal! O fearful moment, upon which so much depends! Admirable is the high wisdom of God, which hath placed a point in the midst betwixt time and eternity, unto which all the time of this life is to relate, and upon which the whole eternity of the other is to depend!

[a] Psal. lxxxiv. 4.

O moment, which art neither time nor eternity, but art the horizon of both, and dividest things temporal from eternal! O narrow moment! O most dilated point! wherein so many things are to be concluded, and so strict an account is to be given, and where so rigorous a sentence is to be pronounced, is ever to stand in force! A strange case, that a business of eternity is to be resolved in a moment, and no place allowed for the intercession of friends, or our own diligence!

It will be then in vain to make any addresses or application; there is none will intercede for thee, nor can give thee absolution; the rigour of the Judge in that instant wherein thou expirest, will allow no farther mercy: St. John says, that heaven and earth shall fly from the presence of the Judge[a]; whither wilt thou go, to what place canst thou repair, being the person against whom the process is commenced? It is therefore said, that heaven and earth shall fly, because neither the saints of heaven shall there favour thee, nor the powers of earth assist thee; there shall be place for nothing that may help thee: what, then, would a sinner give for leave to offer up one poor prayer to God, when it is too late! That which would now serve thy turn, and thou despisest, thou wouldst then have done, and canst not. Provide thyself, therefore, in time, whilst it may avail thee, and defer it not until that instant, wherein nothing can do thee good. Now thou mayest help thyself, now thou mayest find favour: expect not that moment wherein thy own endeavours will be useless, and there will be none to help or assist thee.

O what a lamentable thing will it be for a sinner, to see himself not only abandoned by men, but also by angels, and even by God himself; and to be delivered over into the power of the infernal dragon, without all hopes of escaping from him, who will seize upon his soul, and carry it to the abyss of hell, there to be tormented for ever!

How can men be careless, seeing so important a business, as is the salvation of their souls, depends upon an instant, wherein no new diligence nor preparation will avail them? Since, then, we know not when that moment will be, let us not be any moment unprovided; this is a business not to be one point of time neglected, since that point may be our

[a] Apocal. xx.

damnation. What will a hundred years, spent with great austerity in the service of God, profit us, if, in the end of all those years, we shall commit some grievous sin, and death shall seize upon us before repentance?

Let no man secure himself in his past virtues, but continue them unto the end; since, if he die not in grace, all is lost; and if he doth, what matters it to have lived a thousand years in the greatest troubles and afflictions this world could lay upon him? O moment, in which the just shall forget all his labours, and shall rest assured of all his virtues! O moment! which art certain to be, uncertain when to be, and most certain never to be again! I will therefore now fix thee in my memory, that I may not hereafter meet thee in my eternal ruin and perdition.

There are three things which would make a sinner tremble: The first, when his soul is to be plucked out of his body; the second, when it is to appear before God to receive judgment; and the third, when sentence is to be pronounced. How terrible, then, is this moment, wherein all these three things so terrible are to pass! Let a Christian often, whilst he lives, place himself in that instant, from whence let him behold, on one part, the time of his life which he is to live; and, on the other, the eternity whereunto he enters; and let him consider what remains unto him of that, and what he hopes for in this; in that instant a thousand years of life shall appear unto the sinner no more than one hour; and one hour of torments shall appear a thousand years. Behold thy life from this watch-tower, from this horizon, and measure it with the eternal, and thou shalt find it of no extension.

O dreadful moment, which cuts off the thread of time, and begins the web of eternity! I will therefore provide for this moment, that I may not lose eternity; this is that precious pearl, for which I will give all that I have or am; it shall ever be in my memory, I shall ever be solicitous of it, since it may every day come upon me.

For eternity depends upon death, death upon life, and life upon a thread, which may either be broken or cut; and that even when I most hope, and most endeavour to prolong it. My life is never secure; I will therefore ever fear that instant, which gives an end to time, and beginning to eternity.

THE PRAYER.

Benediction and praise be to him who is seated upon the throne, and to the Lamb, who hath redeemed us in his blood, and hath placed us in his eternal kingdom. Amen.

CHAP. IX.

The End of Temporal Life is terrible.

DEATH, because it is the end of life, is, by the philosopher, said to be the terrible of all things terrible: what would he have said, if he had known it to be the beginning of eternity, and the gate through which we enter into that vast abyss, no man knowing upon what side he shall fall into that profound and bottomless depth! If death be terrible for ending the business of life, what is it for ushering in the instant, wherein we are to give an account of life before that terrible and most just Judge, who, therefore, died that we might use it well!

It is not the most terrible part of death to leave the life of this world, but to give an account of it unto the Creator of the world; especially in such a time wherein he is to use no mercy: this is a thing so terrible, that it made holy Job to tremble, notwithstanding he had so good an account to make; who was so just, that God himself gloried in having such a servant.

Death is terrible for many weighty reasons; whereof, not the least is the sight of the offended Judge, who is not only judge but party, and a most irrefragable witness; in whose visage shall then appear such a severity against the wicked, that it is better to suffer all manner of torments, than to behold the face of his angry Judge.

How will it then amaze us, when we shall behold Jesus Christ himself alive, not a dead image; not in the humility of the cross, but upon a throne of majesty, and seat of justice; not in a time of mercy, but in the hour of vengeance; not naked, with pierced hands, but armed against sinners with the sword of justice; when he shall come to judge and revenge the injuries which they have done him! God is as

righteous in his justice as in his mercy; and as he hath allotted a time for mercy, so he will for justice.

As in this life the rigour of his justice is, as it were, repressed and suspended; so in that point of death, when the sinner shall receive judgment, it shall be let loose, and overwhelm him. A great and rapid river, which should, for thirty or forty years together, have its current violently stopped; what a mass of waters would it collect in so long a space! and if it should then be let loose, with what fury would it overrun, and bear down all before it! and what resistance could withstand it? Since, then, the Divine justice, which the prophet Daniel compares not to an ordinary river, but to a river of fire [a], for the greatness and fury of the rigour, shall be repressed for thirty or forty years during the life of man, what an infinity of wrath will it amass together! and with what fury will it burst out upon the miserable sinner, in the face of the offended Judge? And, therefore, the prophet Daniel saith, That a river of fire issued from his countenance, and that his throne was of flames, and the wheels of it burning fire, because all shall then be fire, rigour, and justice; he sets forth unto us his tribunal-throne with wheels, to signify thereby the force and violence of his omnipotency, in executing the severity of his justice; all which shall appear in that moment, when sinners shall be brought into judgment, when the Lord shall speak unto them in his wrath, and confound them in his fury.

O man! which hast now time, consider in what condition thou shalt see thyself in that instant; then neither the blood of Christ, shed for thee, nor the Son of God crucified, nor the intercession or prayers of the blessed saints, nor the Divine mercy itself, shall avail thee; but thou shalt only behold an incensed and revenging God, whose mercies shall then only serve to augment his justice: thou shalt perceive that none will take thy part, but all will be against thee; thou art to expect no patron, no protector, but thy virtuous actions; only they shall accompany thee; when all shall leave thee, they only shall not forsake thee: the rich man shall not then have multitudes of servants to set forth his greatness, nor well-feed lawyers to defend his process; only

[a] Dan. vii.

his good works shall bestead him, and they only shall defend him.

There, when their treasures, which have been heaped up in this world, and guarded with so much care, shall fail their masters, their alms bestowed on the poor shall not fail them; there, when their children, kindred, friends, and servants, shall all fail them, the strangers which they have lodged, the sick which they have visited, and the needy which they have succoured, shall not fail them: let us, therefore, provide for that day, and take care that our works be good ones.

It is to be admired how many dare do ill in the presence of that Judge, with whom nothing can prevail, but doing well; and the wonder is much the greater, that we dare, with our evil works, offend him who is to judge them. The thief is not so impudent as to rob his neighbour, if the magistrate looks on; but would be held a fool, if he should rob or offend the magistrate himself, in his own house. How dares, then, this poor thing, man, injure the very person of his most upright and just Judge, (before whom it is most certain he shall appear,) to his face, in his own house; in so high a manner as to prefer the devil, his and our greatest enemy, before him? Every one who sins, makes, as it were, a judgment, and passes a sentence in favour of Satan against Jesus Christ; of this unjust judgment of man, the Son of God, who is most unjustly sentenced by a sinner, will, at the last day, take a most strict and severe account; let him expect, from his own injustice, how great is to be the Divine justice against him.

Let him take heed how he works, since all his actions are to be viewed and reviewed by his Redeemer. An artist who knows his work was to appear before some king, or to be examined by some great master in the same art, would strive to give it the greatest perfection of his skill: since, therefore, all our works are to appear before the King of heaven, and the chief Master of virtues, Jesus Christ, let us endeavour that they may be perfect and complete; and the rather, because he is not to examine them for curiosity, but to pass upon us a sentence, either of condemnation, or eternal happiness. Let us, then, call to mind that we are to give an account unto God Almighty, and, therefore, let us take heed what we do; let us weep for what is amiss; let us forsake

our sins, and strive to do virtuous actions; let us look upon ourselves as guilty offenders, and let us stand in perpetual fear of the Judge; still reprehending himself, and saying, Ah me! wretch that I am, how shall I appear before the tribunal of God? How shall I be able to give an account of all my actions? If thou shalt always have these thoughts, thou mayest obtain salvation; and be assured, he that seriously thinks upon death, will never have the boldness to sin.

Another cause of the terribleness of death is, the innumerable multitude of our sins, and their monstrous deformity, shall then be laid open: this is signified by the prophet Daniel, where he says, that the throne of the tribunal of God was of flaming fire; whose nature is not only to burn, but to enlighten; and, therefore, in that Divine judgment shall not only be executed the rigour of his justice, but the ugliness, likewise, of human nature shall be discovered: the Judge himself shall not only appear severe, but our sins shall all be discovered and laid open to us; and the sight of them shall make us tremble with fear and astonishment, especially when we shall perceive them to be manifest unto him, who is both judge and party. Our sins now seem unto us but light and trivial, and we see not half of them; but, in our leaving of this life, we shall find them heavy and insupportable.

How shall we remain amazed, when we shall see a number of our actions to be sins, which we never thought to be such! And which is more, we shall find that to be a fault, which we thought to be a laudable work: for many actions, which, in the eyes of men, seem virtuous, will then be found vices in the sight of God; then shall be brought to light the works which we have done, and those which we have left undone; the evil of that action which we have committed, and the good of that which we have omitted: neither is there account to be taken only of the evils which we do, but of the good also, which we do not well; all will be strictly searched, and narrowly looked into, and must pass by many eyes.

The devil, as our accuser, shall frame the process of our whole life, and shall accuse us of all he knows; and if any thing shall escape his knowledge, it shall not, therefore, be concealed; for our own conscience shall cry out and accuse us of it; and lest our conscience might flatter us, or be ignorant of some faults, our guardian-angel shall then be fiscal

and accuser, calling for Divine justice against us, and shall discover what our own souls are ignorant of. And if the devil, our conscience, and guardian-angel, shall fail in any thing, as not knowing all, the Judge himself, who is both party and witness, and whose Divine knowledge penetrates into the bottom of our wills, shall there declare many things for vices, which were here esteemed for virtues. O strange way of judgment, where none denies, and all accuse, even the offender accuses himself; and where all are witnesses, even the judge and party! O dreadful judgment, where there is no advocate, and four accusers, the devil, thy conscience, thy guardian-angel, and thy very Judge, who will accuse thee of many things, which thou thoughtest to have alleged for thy defence: then all shall be laid open, and confusion shall cover the sinner with the multitude of his offences. How shall he blush to see himself in the presence of the King of heaven, in so foul and squalid garments!

If a man, when he is to speak with some great prince, desire to be decently and well clad, how will he be out of countenance to appear before him dirty, and half naked? How shall then a sinner be ashamed to see himself before the Lord of all, naked of good works, bedirted and defiled with abominable and horrid crimes?

Besides the multitude of sins whereof the whole life shall be full, the heinousness of them shall be also laid open before him, and he shall tremble at the sight of that, which he now thinks but a trivial fault; for then he shall clearly see the ugliness of sin, the dissonancy of it unto reason, the deformity it causes in the soul, the injury it doth to the Lord of the world, his ingratitude to Christ his Redeemer, the prejudice it brings unto himself; hell, into which he falls, and eternal glory, which he loses; the least of these were sufficient to cover his heart with sadness and grief, but all together, what amazement and confusion will they cause, especially when he shall perceive that sins produce an ugliness in the soul, beyond all the corporal deformities which can be imagined. Let us, therefore, avoid them now, for all are to come to light, and we must account for all, even to the last farthing: neither is this account to be made in gross only, for the greatest and most apparent sins, but even for the least and smallest: in human tribunals, the judge takes no notice of

small matters, but in the courts of Divine judicature nothing passes; the least things are as diligently looked into as the greater. There is also, in the end of life, another cause of much terror unto sinners, which is the lively knowlege which they shall have of the Divine benefits received, and the charge which shall be laid against them for their great ingratitude and abuse of them: in that instant, sinners are not only to stand in fear of their own bad works, but of the grace and benefits of God Almighty conferred upon them.

Another confusion shall cover them, when they shall see what God hath done to oblige and assist them toward their salvation; and what they, to the contrary, have done, to draw upon them their own damnation: they shall tremble to see what God did for their good, and that he did so much as he could do no more, all which hath been misemployed and abused by themselves.

We will consider every one of these benefits by themselves. The first which occurs, is that of the creation: and what could God do more, since in this one benefit of thy creation, he gave thee all what thou art, both in soul and body? If, wanting an arm, thou wouldest esteem thyself much obliged, and be very thankful unto him who should bestow one upon thee, which were sound, strong, and useful; why art thou not so to God, who hath given thee arms, heart, soul, body, and all?

Consider what thou wert, before he gave thee a being; nothing: and now thou enjoyest, not only a being, but the best being of the elemental world: betwixt being and not being, there is an infinite distance; see, then, what thou owest unto thy Creator; and thou shalt find thy debt to be no less than infinite, since he hath not only given thee a being, but a noble being, and that not by necessity, but out of an infinite love, and by election; making choice of thee amongst an infinity of men possible, whom he might have created. If lots were to be cast among an hundred persons for some honourable charge, how fortunate would he be esteemed, who should draw the lot from so many competitors? Behold, then, thy own happiness, who, from an absolute nothing, hath lighted upon a being amongst an infinity of creatures possible; and whence proceeds this singular favour, but from God? who, out of those numberless millions,

hath picked out thee, he having many others, who, if he had created them, would have served him better than thyself: besides this, he not only created thee by election, and gave thee a noble being; but supernatural happiness being no way due unto thy nature, he created thee for it, and gave thee for thy end the most high and eminent that could be imagined, to wit, the eternal possession of thy Creator.

It being, then, so great a benefit to have created thee, it is yet a greater to have preserved and suffered thee until this instant, without casting thee into a thousand hells for thy sins and offences. From how many, for one only fault committed, hath he withdrawn his preservation, and suffered them to die in that sin for which they are now in hell? and some of them, if they had been pardoned, would have proved more grateful than thou! Behold how many angels, for their first offence, he threw headlong down from heaven, and expected them no longer, and yet still expects thee.

Consider thou owest him for preserving thee, as much as for creating thee; preservation being a continued creation; and more, for preserving thee, although his enemy. In thy creation, although thou didst not deserve a being, yet thou demerited it not; but in thy preservation thou hast deserved the contrary; which is to be forsaken and abandoned.

Consider the benefit thou receivest by the incarnation of the Son of God; by which thou art delivered from sin and hell, and at such a time, when thy miserable condition was desperate of all other remedy; and he hath exalted thee to his grace, and the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven; and this he did with such singular love, even to the annihilating, as it were, himself, that he might exalt thee, taking upon himself thy nature, that he might only confer an honour upon thee, which he would not to the angels. All is great, all is transcendent in this unspeakable goodness; see what God could do more for thee, and see that thou mayest do much more for him, and dost not.

Consider the benefit of our redemption by the death and passion of Christ: what could the Son of God do more for thee, than die and shed his blood for thee, and that not with an ordinary death, but so ignominious, as it seems he could not suffer more? Set before thy eyes Christ crucified upon Mount Calvary; if a man more infamous be imaginable;

executed publicly between two thieves, as a traitor and an heretic, broaching false doctrine, and making himself king, as a traitor unto Cæsar.

Two crimes so infamous, as they not only defame the person who commits them, but stain and infect his stock and lineage. Behold in what poverty he died, if greater can be thought on; to the end thou mayest see, if it were possible he should do more for thee than what he did. Whilst he lived, he had not whereon to repose his head; neither found he one drop of water, to refresh his sacred lips; even the earth refused him, wanting whereon to rest his feet. Behold with what grief and pains he expired; since, from head to foot, he was but one continued wound: his feet and hands were pierced with nails, and his head with thorns.

Who would not be amazed at the goodness and piety of a great emperor, who, having a desire to pardon a notorious traitor, should, rather than abate one jot of his justice, take upon him the habit and shape of that traitor, and suffer publicly in the market-place, that the offender might be spared? Thus did God, taking upon him the form of a servant, and dying upon the cross, to free condemned man from eternal death.

Consider, then, how dreadful it shall be unto a sinner, when he shall receive a charge, not only of his own being, and his own life, but also of the being and life of God; of the incarnation, passion, life and death, of Christ our Redeemer, who hath so often given himself in the sacrament of his body and blood.

The murderer, who stands charged with the life of a man, although it be of some wicked person, yet fears to be apprehended, and brought to judgment. How is it, then, that he, who is charged with the life of God, tremble not? O how fearful a thing is it, when a vile creature shall enter into judgment with his Creator; and shall be demanded an account of the blood of Christ, whose value is infinite? What account can he give of such a benefit, and of all the rest which he hath received, even from the greatest unto the least?

When Christ shall say unto him: "I, when thou hadst no being, gave thee one; inspired thee with a soul, and placed thee above all things that are upon the earth. I, for

thee, created heaven, air, sea, earth, and all things; and yet am dishonoured by thee, and held most vile and base; and yet, for all this, have not ceased to do thee good, and bestowed upon thee innumerable benefits; for thy sake, being God, I was content to make myself a servant; was buffeted, spit upon, and condemned to a punishment of slaves; and to redeem thee from death, suffered the death of the cross. It is heaven I intended for thee, and from thence sent thee the Holy Ghost. I invited thee unto the kingdom of heaven; offered myself to be thy head, thy spouse, thy food, thy drink, thy shepherd; I chose thee for the heir of heaven, and drew thee out of darkness into light."

To such excess of love, what have we to answer, but to stand astonished and confounded, that we have been so ungrateful, and given occasion, to the devil, of one of the greatest scorns and injuries, which could be put upon our Redeemer? when he shall say unto him, "Thou createdst man; for him wast born in poverty, lived in labour, and died in pain and torment; I have done nothing for him, but sought to damn him into a thousand hells; and yet, for all this, it is I whom he strives to please, and not thee. Thou dost prepare for him a crown of eternal glory, I desire to torment him in hell; and yet he had rather serve me without interest, than thee for thy promise of so great a reward. I should have been ashamed to have created and redeemed a wretch, so ungrateful unto him, from whom he hath received so great benefits. But, since he loves me better than thee, let him be mine, unto whom he hath so often given up himself."

We are not only to give an account of these general benefits, but of those which are more particular: of the good examples which we have seen, of the instructions we have heard, of the inspiration which hath been sent us. Let us tremble, that we are so careless of that, for which all the care in the world is not sufficient. Now is the time of benefiting ourselves: if we shall now despise it, in what case shall we be? Let us not mispend the time of this life, since so severe an account will be demanded of all the benefits which we have received. Let us take heed what use we make of this temporal life; let us not lose it, since we are to answer for every part of it. This time is bestowed upon us, wherein to gain heaven; and a most strict account will be demanded of

us, if we despise it. It is not ours for which we are to answer; we are not the lords of time; let us not, therefore, dispose of it for our own pleasure, but for the service of God, whose it is.

THE PRAYER.

O God, every way most perfect and good! which art so scrupulous in thy justice, and so indulgent in thy mercy; rigorous with thyself, that thou mightest be merciful unto us: O God, infinitely good, infinitely holy, infinitely just and perfect! we magnify thee, we praise thee, we glorify thee; we give thanks unto thee, heavenly Father, for all the blessings thou hast bestowed upon us.

CHAP. X.

The End of all Time.

After we have finished the time of this life, the end of all time is to succeed, which is to give a period unto all which we leave behind us. Let man, therefore, know, that those things which he leaves behind, for his memory after death, are as vain as those he enjoyed in his life. Let him raise proud mausoleums; let him erect statues of marble; let him build populous cities; let him leave a numerous kindred; let him stamp his name in brass, and fix his memory with a thousand nails; all must have an end. His cities shall sink, his statues fall, his family perish, his memory be defaced; and all shall end, because all time must end. Not only our pleasures and delights are to end in death, but our memories, at the farthest, are to end with time: and since all are to conclude, all are to be despised as vain and perishing.

If the death of a monarch or prince of some corner of the world, prognosticated by an eclipse or comet, cause a fear and amazement in the beholders; what shall the death of the whole world, and with it all things temporal, and of time itself[a], foretold by angels, with prodigious apparitions and dreadful noise, produce in us? Time shall end, and the

[a] Apoc. c. 10.

world shall die; and that, if we may so say, a most horrible and disastrous death. How much the whole world, and the whole race of mankind, exceeds one particular person, by so much shall the universal end surpass in terror the particular end of this life.

Let us look upon the strange manner of the end of the world, which, being so terrible, gives us to understand the vanity and deceit of all things in it. As it is usual in wars to skirmish, and to make inroads before the day of battle; so before that dreadful day, wherein the army of vengeance and of all punishments are to encounter with the army of sin, the Lord shall, from divers parts, send forth several calamities, as plagues, famine, earthquakes, wars, inundations, droughts; which shall be forerunners of that great day of battle; which shall, like light horsemen, scour the campania. And if those miseries do now so much afflict us, what shall they then do, when God shall add unto them his utmost force and power; when all creatures shall arm against sinners, and the zeal of the Divine justice shall be their captain-general? Which the wise man declares in these words: "His zeal shall take up arms, and shall arm the creatures, to revenge him of his enemies: he shall put on justice as a breast-plate, and righteous judgment as a helmet; and he shall take equity as a buckler, and shall sharpen his wrath as a lance, and the circuit of the earth shall fight for him; thunderbolts shall be sent from the clouds, as a well-shooting bow, and shall not fail to hit the mark; and hail shall be sent, full of stormy wrath; the waters of the sea shall threaten them, the rivers shall combat furiously; a most stormy wind shall rise against them, and shall divide them as a whirlwind[b]."

Very dreadful are these words, although they contain but the war, which three of the elements are to make against sinners. But not only fire, air, and water, but earth also, and heaven, shall fall upon them, and confound them; for all creatures shall express their fury in that day, and shall rise against man. And if the clouds shall discharge thunderbolts and stones upon their heads, the heavens shall shoot no less balls than stars, which shall fall from thence. If hail, no bigger than little stones, falling but from the clouds, destroy

[b] Sap. 5.

the fields, and sometimes kill the lesser sort of cattle; what shall pieces of stars do, falling from the firmament or upper region?

As in man, who is called the lesser world, when he is to die, the humours, which are as the elements, are troubled and out of order; his eyes, which are as the sun and moon, are darkened; his other senses, which are as the lesser stars, fall away; his reason, which is as the celestial virtues, is off the hinges; so in the death of the greater world, before it dissolve and expire, the sun shall be turned into darkness, the moon into blood, the stars shall fall, and the whole world shall tremble with a horrid noise. If the sun, moon, and other celestial bodies, which are held incorruptible, shall suffer such changes, what shall be done with those frail and corruptible elements of earth, air, and water? If this inferior world doth depend upon the heavens, those celestial bodies being altered and broken in pieces, in what estate must the lower elements remain, when the virtues of heaven shall falter, and the wandering stars shall lose their way, and fail to observe their order?

How shall the air be troubled with violent and sudden whirlwinds, dark tempests, horrible thunders, and furious flashings of lightning! How shall the earth tremble with dreadful earthquakes, opening herself with a thousand mouths, and casting forth, as it were, whole volcanoes of fire and sulphur; and not content to overthrow the loftiest towers, shall swallow up high mountains, and bury cities in her entrails? How shall the sea then rage, mounting her proud waves above the clouds, as if they meant to overwhelm the whole earth? The roaring of the ocean shall astonish those who are far distant from the sea, and inhabit in the midst of the firm land. Therefore it is said, that there shall be in the earth afflictions of nations, for the confusion of the noise of the sea.

What shall men do in this general perturbation of nature? They shall remain amazed and pale as death. What comfort shall they have? They shall stand gazing one upon another, and every one shall conceive a new fear, by beholding in his neighbour's face the image of his own death. What fear and horror shall then possess them, when they shall hourly expect the success and dire effects portended by those monstrous

prodigies? All commerce shall then cease; the market-places shall be unpeopled, and the tribunals remain solitary and silent; none shall then be ambitious of honours, none shall seek after pastimes and new-invented pleasures; nor shall the covetous wretch then busy himself with the care of his treasures; none shall frequent the palaces of kings and princes, but, through fear, shall forget even to eat and drink; all their care shall be employed how to escape those deluges, earthquakes, and lightning; seeking for places of security, which they shall not meet with. Who will remember the sumptuous buildings he hath reared, the beauty he hath once doted upon?

If we shall forget what we ourselves most valued and gloried in, how shall we remember that of others? What remembrance shall there then be of the acts of the great Alexander? of the learning of Aristotle? of the wisdom of Solomon? and of the endowments of the most renowned men of the world? Their fame shall remain from thenceforward for ever buried, and shall die with the world for a whole eternity.

The mariners, when in some furious tempest they are upon point of sinking, how are they amazed at the rage of the watery element! How grieved and afflicted with ruin, which threatens them! What prayers and vows do they send up to heaven! How disinterested are they of all worldly matters, since they fling their wealth and riches into the sea, for which they have run such hazard! In what condition shall be, then, the inhabitants of the earth; when not only the sea, with his raging, but heaven and earth, with a thousand prodigies, shall affright them? When the sun shall put on a robe of mourning, and amaze them with the horror of his darkness; when the moon shall look like blood, the stars fall, and the earth shall shake them with its unquiet trembling; when the whirlwinds shall throw them off their legs, and frequent and thick flashes of lightning dazzle their sight, and confound their understanding; what shall sinners then do, for whose sake all these fearful wonders shall happen?

Let us, by the particular changes which have happened, judge how dreadful the conjunction of so many and so great calamities, in the end of the world, altogether will be. But all the alterations past of the elements were no more than

skirmishes; what shall then be the battle which they are to give unto sinners, when the heavens shall shoot its arrows, and give the alarm, with prodigious thunders, and shall declare their wrath with horrible apparitions?

In the last days, the sun shall hide his beams under a mourning garment; and the moon shall clothe herself with blood, to signify the wars, which all the creatures are to make with fire and blood, against those who have despised their Creator. When on one side, the earth shall rouse itself up against them, and shall shake them off her back, as unwilling to endure their burdens any longer; when the sea shall pursue and assault them within their own houses; and the air shall not permit them to be safe in the fields. Certainly, it shall then be no wonder, if they shall desire the mountains to cover them, and the hills to hide them within their caverns. What shall it be, then, when the Lord of all shall arm all the elements against man, and shall give the alarm to all creatures, to revenge him upon him, so ungrateful for his infinite benefits?

The creatures now groan, to see themselves abused by man, in contempt of his and their Creator; but they shall then shake off their yokes, and shall revenge themselves of the grievances which they suffer under him, and the injuries he hath done unto the Creator of all: all the elements, all creatures, the whole world, shall be up in arms against man; the summer shall be changed into winter, and winter into the summer; no creature shall observe the prefixed law, with him who hath not observed the law of his Creator, that so they may revenge both God and themselves: but more terrible, then, is that which follows, that, after so many calamities, the bottomless pit, which is hell, shall burst open, and out of his profound throat belch forth so thick a smoke, as shall wholly darken the sun and air; from which smoke shall sally forth a multitude of deformed locusts, which, in great swarms, shall disperse themselves over the face of the whole earth, and leaving the fields, herbs, and what is sown, fall upon such men as have been unfaithful unto God, and shall, for five months, torment them with greater rage than scorpions[c].

Some doctors understand those locusts according to the

[c] Apoc. c. 9.

letter; that they shall be a certain kind of true locusts, but of a strange figure and fierceness; others, that they shall be devils in hell, in the shape of locusts. And it is no marvel, that, in the destruction of the world, devils shall appear in visible forms; since, in the destruction of Babylon, they appeared in divers figures of beasts, as was prophesied by Isaiah.

But how shall it then fare with sinners, when, after all, shall come that general fire, so often foretold, which shall either fall from heaven, or ascend out of hell, or, (according to Albertus Magnus,) proceed from both, and shall devour and consume all it meets with? Whither shall the miserable fly, when that river of flames, or, (to say better,) that inundation and deluge of fire, shall so encompass them, as no place of surety shall be left; where nothing can avail but a holy life; when all besides shall perish, in that universal ruin of the whole world?

What lamentations were in Rome, when it burnt for seven days together! What shrieks were heard in Troy, when it was wholly consûmed with flames! What howling and astonishment in Pentapolis, when those cities were destroyed with fire from heaven! What weeping was there in Jerusalem, when they beheld the house of God, the glory of their kingdom, the wonder of the world, involved in fire and smoke! Imagine what these people felt; they saw their houses and goods on fire, and no possibility of saving them; when the husband heard the shrieks and cries of his dying wife; the father, of his little children; and, unawares, perceived himself so encompassed with flames, that he could neither relieve them, nor free himself.

What then shall be the straits and exigencies of that general burning, when those who shall escape earthquakes, inundations of the sea, the fury of whirlwinds, and lightning from heaven, shall fall into that universal fire, that deluge of flames, which shall consume all, and make an end of men and their memories! Of those who lived before the flood, and were masters of the world for so long a time, except it be of some few, we know nothing. Those heroical actions, which, certainly, some of them performed, and gained by them incomparable fame, lie buried in the waters; and there remains no more memory of those who did them, than if

they had never been born: no more permanent shall be the fame of those, which now resounds in the ears of the whole world; Cyrus, Alexander, Hannibal, Scipio, Cæsar Augustus, Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Euclid, and the rest; no more world, no more fame; this fire shall end all the smoke.

And, indeed, the world may be said to be like a house full of smoke; which in such manner blinds the eyes, as it suffers not those within it to see things as they are; and so the world, with its deceits, so disguise the nature of human things, as we perceive not what they are; ambition and human honour, (which the world so much dotes after,) are no more than smoke, without substance, which so blinds our understandings, that we know not the truth of that we so much covet. It is no marvel, that so much smoke comes at last to end in flames.

What shall it then profit the worldlings, to have rich vessels of gold and silver, curious embroideries, precious tapestries, pleasant gardens, sumptuous palaces, and all what the world now esteems, when they shall, with their own eyes, behold their costly palaces burnt, their rich and curious pieces of gold melted, and their flourishing and pleasant orchards consumed, without power to preserve them or themselves? All shall burn, and with it the world, and all the memory and fame of it shall die; and that which mortals thought to be immortal, shall then end and perish.

No more shall Aristotle be cited in the schools, nor Ulpian alleged in the tribunals; no more shall Plato be read amongst the learned, nor Cicero imitated by the orators; no more shall Seneca be admired by the understanding, nor Alexander extolled among captains; all fame shall then die, and all memory be forgotten. O vanity of men, whose memorials are as vain as themselves, which in few years perish, and that which lasts longest, can endure no longer than the world! What became of that statue of massy gold, which Gorgias, the Leontine, placed in Delphos, to eternize his name; and that of Gabrion, in Rome; and that of Berosus, with the golden tongue, in Athens; and innumerable others, erected to great captains, in brass or hardest marble? Certainly, many years since they are perished: if not, they shall perish in this great and general conflagration; only virtue no fire can burn.

Three hundred and sixty statues were erected by the Athenians, unto Demetrius Phalereus, for having governed their commonwealth ten years with great virtue and prudence: but of so little continuance were those trophies, that those very emblems, which were raised by gratitude, were soon after destroyed by envy; and he himself who saw his statues set up in so great a number, saw them also pulled down; but he still retained this comfort, which Christians may learn from him, that, beholding how they threw his images unto the ground, he could say, at last, "they cannot overthrow those virtues for which they were erected." If they were true virtues, he said well; for those neither envy can demolish, nor human power destroy.

And, which is more, the Divine power will not, in this general destruction of the world, consume them, but will preserve, in his eternal memory, as many as shall persevere in goodness, and die in his holy grace; for only charity, holiness, and Christian virtues, shall not end when the world ends.

The rich man shall not be preserved by his wealth, nor the mighty by his power, nor the crafty by his wiles; only the just shall be freed by his virtues. None shall escape terror of that day, by fast-sailing ships, or speed of horses; the sea itself shall burn, and the fire shall overtake the swiftest post; only holiness and charity shall defend the servants of God.

How then shall I, miserable sinner, in this universal conflagration, behave myself? What counsel shall I take in that extremity, when my own conscience shall be my accuser, and when I shall behold the world all on fire about me? Whither shall I flee for safety, when no place will afford it? Shall I climb unto the mountains? thither the flames will follow me. Shall I descend into the vallies? thither the fire will pursue me. Shall I shut up myself in some strong castle or tower? But there the wrath of God will assault me, and the fire will pass the fosses, consume the bulwarks, and make an end of them and me. What shall I, poor wretch, do? Let thy power, O Lord, triumph over my misery, and glorify thyself in my greatest extremities; and thy will, O Lord, be done, if it be thy Divine pleasure, in my confusion.

CHAP. XI.

Of the last Day of Time, and of the Judgment which is to pass upon all Things in the World.

We must suppose, that the coming of Christ to judgment is to be with greater terror and majesty, than hath yet been manifested by any of the Divine Persons, either in himself, or any of his creatures. If an angel which represented God, and was only to promulgate the law, came with that terror and majesty unto Mount Sinai, as made the Hebrew people, though purified and prepared for his coming, to quake and tremble; what shall the Lord of the law do, when he himself comes to take an account of the law, to revenge the breach of it? With what terror and majesty shall he appear unto sinners, and to such which are unprepared for his reception, who are then to be all present, and judged in that last day of time? For after those prodigious thunders, lightnings, earthquakes, and prodigies; after burning in that deluge of fire the sinners of the world, the saints remaining still alive, that that article of our faith may be literally fulfilled, "From thence he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead;" the heavens shall open, and over the vallies of Jehosaphat, the Redeemer of the world, attended by all the angels of heaven, invisible forms of admirable splendour, shall, with a Divine majesty, descend to judge it.

Before the Judge shall be borne his standard, which Chrysostom and divers other doctors affirm, shall be the very cross on which he suffered[a]. Then shall the just meet (as the apostle says,) their Redeemer in the air; who, at his issuing forth of the heavens, shall, with a voice that may be heard of all the world, pronounce this his commandment, "Arise, ye dead, and come unto judgment;" which shall be proclaimed by four angels, in the four quarters of the world, with such vehemence, that the sound shall pierce unto the infernal region; from whence the souls of the damned shall issue forth, and re-enter their bodies, which shall from thence-forward suffer the terrible torments of hell. The souls of the

[a] Chrysost. tom. iii. de Cruce.

blessed filling their bodies with the four gifts of glory, shall make them more resplendent than the sun, and with the gift of agility shall join themselves with those just, who remain alive in the air in their passible bodies; which being yet mortal, and therefore not able to endure these vehement affections of the heart, of joy, desire, reverence, love, and admiration of Christ, shall then die, and in that instaut behold the Divine essence, after which their souls shall be again immediately united to their bodies, before they can be corrupted, or so much as fall unto the ground, and thence-forward continue glorious; for in the moment wherein they die, they shall be purified from those noxious humours and qualities wherewith our bodies are now infected.

And therefore it was convenient they should first die, that being so cleansed from all filth, they might, by the restitution of their blessed souls, receive gifts of glory. Who can express the joy of those happy souls, when they shall take possession of their new, glorious, and beautiful bodies, which were long since eaten by worms or wild beasts, some four, some five thousand years ago turned into dust and ashes? What thanks shall they give unto God, who, after so long a separation, hath restored them to their ancient companions? But the souls of the damned, how shall they rage and curse their own flesh, since, to please and pamper it, hath been the occasion of their torments and eternal unhappiness!

The reprobates being then in the valley of Jehosaphat[b], and the predestinate in the air, the Judge shall appear above Mount Olivet, unto whom the clouds shall serve as a chariot, and his most glorious body shall cast forth rays of such incomparable splendour, as the sun shall appear but as coal; for even the predestinate shall shine as the sun, but the light and brightness of Christ shall far exceed them, as the sun doth the least star; the which most admirable sight shall be yet more glorious by those thousand millions of excellent and heavenly spirits which shall attend him, who, having formed themselves aerial bodies of more or less splendour, according to their hierarchy and order, shall fill the whole space betwixt heaven and earth with unspeakable beauty and variety.

[b] Zac. c. 1.

The Saviour of the world shall sit upon a throne of great majesty, his countenance shall be most mild and peaceable towards the good, and, though the same, most terrible unto the bad; out of his sacred wounds shall issue beams of light towards the just, full of love and sweetness; but unto sinners full of fire and wrath, who shall weep bitterly for the evils which issue from them: so great shall be the majesty of Christ, that the miserable damned, and the devils themselves, notwithstanding all the hate they bear him, shall yet prostrate themselves and adore him, and, to their greater confusion, acknowledge him for Lord and God[c]; and those who have most blasphemed him, shall then bow before him, fulfilling the promises of the eternal Father, that all things should be subject unto him, that he would make his enemies his footstool, and that all knees should bend before him: here also shall the sinners behold him in glory, whom they have despised for vain trifles of the earth.

What an amazement will it be to see him King of so great majesty, who suffered so much ignominy upon the cross, and even from those, whom he redeemed with his most precious blood! What will they then say, who in scorn crowned the sacred temples of the Lord with thorns, put a reed in his hand for a sceptre, clothed him in some old and broken garment of purple, buffeted and spit upon his blessed face? I know not how the memory of this doth not burst our hearts with compunction!

There shall be thrones for the apostles, and those saints who, poor in spirit, have left all for Christ, who, sitting now as judges with their Redeemer, and condemning by their good example the scandalous lives of sinners, shall approve the sentence of the supreme Judge, and declare his great justice before the world, which with the wicked shall remain confounded and amazed: the tyrants who have afflicted and put to death the holy martyrs, what will they now say, when they shall see them in this glory? Those who trampled under foot the justice and right of the poor of Christ, what will they do when they shall behold their judges? how confounded shall be the kings of the earth, when they shall behold their vassals in glory? and lords, when they shall

[c] Psal. cix. 1 Cor. xv. Phil. ii.

see their slaves amongst the angels, and themselves in equal rank with devils? The good he shall place upon his right hand, elevated in the air, that all the world may honour them as holy; and the wicked shall stand far at his left, remaining upon the earth to their own confusion, and scorn of all.

Immediately the books of all men's consciences shall be opened, and their sins published to the whole world; the most secret sins of their hearts, and those filthy acts which were committed in private, shall all, to their great shame and confusion, be then discovered; the virtuous actions of the just, how secretly soever performed, their holy thoughts, their pious desires, their pure intentions, their good works, which the world now disesteems as madness, shall then be manifested, and they for them be honoured by the whole world.

Nothing shall be of greater confusion unto sinners, than to behold those who have committed equal and greater sins than themselves, to be there in glory; because they made use of the time of repentance, which they despised and neglected. This confusion shall be augmented by that inward charge, which God shall lay against them of his Divine benefits, unto which their angel-guardians shall assist, by giving testimony how often they have dissuaded them from their evil courses, and how rebellious and refractory they have still been to their holy inspirations. The saints shall accuse them, that they have laughed at their good counsels; and shall set forth the dangers whereunto they themselves have been subject by their ill example.

The just Judge shall then immediately pronounce sentence in favour of the good, in these words of love and mercy, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom which was prepared for you from the creation of the world." O what joy shall fill the saints! And what spite and envy shall burst the hearts of sinners! But more, when those miserable wretches shall hear the severe Judge say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into eternal fire, prepared for Satan and his angels:" with this sentence they shall remain for ever overthrown, and covered with eternal sorrow and confusion. "Depart from me!" Alas! dread Sovereign, whither shall they go to avoid thy displeasure! art thou not in heaven, in hell, and everywhere? Dost thou not fill heaven

and earth? Dost not thou hold the universe in thy hands? And doth not thy power comprehend all things? To whom shall they betake themselves? Art not thou he who hast the words of eternal life, who art even thyself life everlasting? Whither wilt thou have these miserable creatures to retire themselves? Do what they can, they cannot go out of thee, since in thee all things have motion, being, and life. Begone, barren trees, twice dead, rooted out of the blessed earth, and are only fit to be cast into the fire; you are not worthy to take up place in the paradise of heaven, where no trees are planted but such as bear good fruit.

At that instant, the fire of that general burning shall invest those miserable creatures[d]; the earth shall open, and hell shall enlarge its throat to swallow them for all eternity, accomplishing that malediction, "Let death come upon them, and let them sink alive into hell[e];" snares, fire, and sulphur shall rain upon sinners: but the just shall then rejoice, singing that song of the Lamb related by St. John, "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Omnipotent! just and righteous are thy ways, King of all eternity! Who will not fear thee, O Lord, and magnify thy name[f]?" With thousand other anthems of joy and jubilee they shall ascend above the stars in a most glorious triumph, until they arrive in the imperial heaven, where they shall be placed in thrones of glory, which they shall enjoy for an eternity of eternities.

In the meantime, the earth, which was polluted for having sustained the bodies of the damned, shall be purified in that general burning; and then shall be renewed the earth, the heavens, the stars, and the sun, which shall shine seven times more than before: and the creatures, which have been here violated and oppressed by the abuse of man, shall then rejoice to see themselves freed from the tyranny of sin and sinners; and, joyful of the triumph of Christ, shall put on mirth and gladness.

This is the end wherein all time is to determine; and this the catastrophe, so fearful unto the wicked, where all things temporal are to conclude: let us therefore take heed how we use them, and that we may use them well; let us be mindful

[d] Psal. liv. [e] Psal. x. [f] Apoc. xv.

of this last day, this day of justice and calamity, this day of terror and amazement; the memory whereof will serve much for the reformation of our lives: let us think of it, and fear it; for it is the most terrible of all things terrible, and the consideration most profitable and acceptable to cause in us a holy fear of God, and to convert us unto him. While I live, I will therefore ever preserve in my memory this day of terror, that I may hereafter enjoy security for the whole eternity of God. Above all things, I will keep before my eyes the last of all days; and all the moments of my life I will think, and for ever think, of eternity.

CONTEMPLATIONS

OF

THE STATE OF MAN.

LIB. II.

CHAP. I.

Of the Greatness of Things Eternal.

ALTHOUGH all temporal things are in themselves little and base, yet unto him, who shall consider the greatness and majesty of the Eternal, they will appear much less, and contemptible.

The greatness of the glory eternal consists not only in the eternity of its duration, but in its intension also, as being supreme, and without limits in its excellency; and therefore we ought not to think much of the sufferings of a thousand years' torments, or to remain in hell itself for some long time, so we might behold Christ in his glory, and enjoy the company of saints, and be partakers of so great a happiness, but for one day.

Such is the beauty of righteousness, such the joy of that eternal light, of that immutable truth and wisdom, that although we were not to continue in it above one day, yet for so short a time, a thousand years in this life, replenished with delights, and abundance of all goods temporal, were justly to be despised: "One day in thy courts is better than a thousand." And if those joys of heaven were short, and those of earth eternal, yet we ought to forsake these for those. What shall it be to possess them for an eternity, when the joy of each day shall be equivalent to many years? If the beauties of all creatures, heavens, earth, flowers, pearls, and all other things that could give any light, were all comprised in one thing; if every one of the stars yielded as much

light as the sun, and the sun shone as bright as all they together: all this so united, would be, in respect of the beauty of God Almighty, as a dark night in respect of the clearest day. As Ahasuerus, who reigned from India to Ethiopia over one hundred and seventy provinces, made a great feast for all his princes, which lasted one hundred and eighty-one days; so shall this King of heaven and earth make his great supper of glory, which shall last for all eternity, for the setting forth of his majesty, and for the honour and entertainment of his servants; where the joys shall be such, as neither the eye hath seen, nor the ear hath heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive: "Come, eat and drink, and be filled, my beloved," shall the King of heaven say; "this feast of mine shall never be ended, there shall come no sorrow after it." O life of lives, surpassing all life! O everlasting life! O life, blessed for evermore, where there is joy without sorrow! O the inanity and emptiness of temporal goods, what proportion do they hold with this greatness, since they are so poor, that even time, from whence they have their being, makes them tedious, and not to be endured? Who could continue a whole month without any diversion, in hearing the choicest music? Nay, who could pass a day free from weariness, without some thought of pleasures? But such is the greatness of those joys which God hath prepared for them who love and fear him, as we shall still desire them afresh, and they will not cloy us in a whole eternity.

Eternal glory is great, both in respect of its purity, being free from all ill; and in respect of its perfection, being highly and excellently good: it doth as far exceed all the grandeur of this world, as the heavens are distant from the earth; and how far that is, we shall form some conception of it, as much as our weakness is able to express.

The most famous mathematician, Christopher Clavius, says, that from the sphere of the moon, which is the lowest heaven, unto the earth, are one hundred and twenty thousand six hundred and thirty miles: from the heaven of the sun, four millions thirty thousand nine hundred and twenty-three miles: and from the firmament, or eighth heaven, one hundred sixty-one millions eight hundred fourscore and four thousand nine hundred and forty-three miles. Here Plato

wills the mathematicians to cease their inquiries; for from hence there is no rule of measuring further: but, without all doubt, it is much further from thence to the imperial heaven; for the only thickness of the starry sphere is said to contain as much as the whole space betwixt that and the earth: insomuch as if a millstone were thrown from the highest of the firmament, and should every hour fall two hundred miles, it would be ninety years before it arrived at the earth. The mathematicians also, and some learned interpreters of the holy Scripture, affirm, that the distance from the earth unto the highest of the firmament, is less than that from thence to the lowest of the imperial heaven; and therefore conclude, if one should live two thousand years, and every day should travel a hundred miles, he should not in all that time reach the lowest of the firmament; and if, after that, he should also travel other two thousand years, he should not reach the highest of it; and from thence four thousand years before he arrived at the lowest of the imperial heaven. O blessed Jesu, which makes us in a moment dispatch so great a journey, and in one little instant brings the souls of the just thither; so short is the way which brings us to heaven, that in an instant the righteous shall mount above the sun and moon, tread the stars under their feet, and enter into the heaven of the blessed.

Proportionable unto this distance of place, is the advantage which the greatness of heaven hath above that of earth, and the same holds in their blessings: let us mount, then, with this consideration, thither, and from that height let us despise all the vanities of this world. All the kingdoms of the earth are but as a point, yea, but as a point of a point: he is higher than the world, who cares not for the world: but of heaven, Baruch could say, "How great is the house of God, how large is the place of his possession[a]!" It is great, and hath no end; high, and unmeasurable. If one, who had ever been bred in an obscure dungeon, were told, that above the earth there was a sun, which enlightened the whole world, and cast his beams far above a hundred thousand leagues in circumference, all the discourses which could be made unto such a one, would hardly make him conceive

[a] Bar. c. iii.

the brightness and beauty of the sun: much less can the glory of those things of the other world be made to appear unto us, though set forth with the greatest beauty the world affords.

O what fools then are they, who, for one point of earth, lose so many leagues of heaven! who, for one short pleasure, lose things so immense and durable! O the greatness of the omnipotency and goodness of God, who hath prepared such celestial mansions and glorious things for the humble and little ones who serve him! "My soul, O Lord my God, thirsteth after thee[b]; I will behold thy face in righteousness; for in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore[c]. Whatsoever I can wish for, is present with thee, whatsoever can be desired, is in thee in abundance; thou shalt make me drink of the river of thy pleasures; for with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light I shall see light[d]. How happy shall I be, when I shall see thee in thyself, and thee in me, and myself in thee, living in everlasting felicity, and enjoying the beatifical vision of thee for evermore! I will therefore trust in thee, my Lord God, for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting happiness, and joys without end[e]."

CHAP. II.

The Greatness of the Eternal Honour of the Just.

The greatness of those goods of the other life, are honours, riches, pleasures, and all the blessings both of body and soul: of each whereof we shall say something apart; and will begin with that of honour.

The nature of honour is to be a reward of virtue; and by how much greater the reward is, by so much the greater is the honour which is conferred: what honour shall it then be, when God shall give unto those who served him, not only to tread upon the stars, to inhabit the palaces of heaven,

[b] Psal. xvii. 15. [c] Psal. xvi. 11.
[d] Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9. [e] Isa. xxvi. 4.

to be lords of the world, but, transcending all that is created, and finding nothing amongst his riches sufficient to reward them, shall give them his own infinite essence, to enjoy, as a recompense of their holiness, not for a day, but to all eternity!

The highest honour which the Romans bestowed upon their greatest captains, was to grant them a day of triumph, and, in that, permission to wear a crown of grass or leaves, which withered the day following: but the triumph of the just shall be eternal; and their never-fading crown is God himself. O most happy diadem! O most precious garland of the saints, which is of as great worth and value as is God himself! Sapores, king of the Persians, was most ambitious of honour, and would therefore be called the brother of the sun and moon, and friend to the planets. This vain prince erected a most glorious throne, which he placed on high, and thereon sat in great majesty, having under his feet a globe of glass, whereon were artificially represented the motions of the sun, the moon, and stars; and to sit crowned above this fantastical heaven, he esteemed as a great honour. What shall be, then, the honour of the just, who shall truly and really sit above the sun, the moon, and firmament, crowned by the hand of God himself; and that with a crown of gold, graven with the seal of holiness and the glory of honour? And this honour arrives at that height, that Christ himself tells us, "He who shall overcome, I will give him to sit with me in my throne; even as I have overcome, and have sitten with the Father in his throne[a]." O happy labour of the victorious, and glorious combat of the just, against the vices and temptations of the world, whose victory deserves so inestimable a crown!

How great shall be that glory, when a just soul shall, in the presence of an infinite number of angels, sit in the same throne with Christ; and shall, by the just sentence of God, be praised for a conqueror over the world, and the invisible powers of hell! What can it desire more, than to be partaker of all those Divine goods, and even to accompany Christ in the same throne? O how cheerfully do they bear all afflictions for Christ, who, with a lively faith and certain hope, apprehend so sublime honours!

[a] Apoc. iii.

If the applause of men, and the good opinion which they have from others, be esteemed an honour, what shall be the applause of heaven, and the good opinion not only of saints and angels, but of God himself, whose judgment cannot err? David took it for a great honour, that the daughter of his king was judged a reward of his valour: God surpasses this, and honours so much the service of his elect, that he pays their merits with no less a reward than himself.

Besides this, he, who is most known, and is praised and celebrated for good and virtuous by the greatest multitude, is esteemed the most glorious and honourable person: but all this world is a solitude in respect of the citizens of heaven, where innumerable angels approve and praise the virtuous actions of the just: and they likewise are nothing; and all creatures, men, and angels, but as a solitary wilderness, in respect of the Creator. What man so glorious upon earth, whose worth and valour hath been known to all? Those who were born before him could not know him: but the just in heaven shall be known by all, past and to come, and by all the angels, and by the King of men and angels. Human fame is founded upon the applause of mortal men, who, besides being less than angels, may be deceived, may speak untruth, and are, most part of them, sinners and wicked; how far must that honour exceed it, which is conferred upon the just by the holy angels, and by those blessed and pure souls, who cannot be deceived themselves, nor will deceive others! If we esteem it more to be honoured by the kings of the earth, by the great men of the world, than by some ignorant peasants of some poor village; how ought we then to value the honour which shall be bestowed upon us by the saints in heaven, who are the kings and grandees of the court of God, and are all replenished with most perfect and Divine wisdom? All the honour of men is ridiculous; and his ambition no wiser who seeks it, than if one worm should desire to be honoured by another: all the earth is but as a village, or rather some small cottage, in respect of heaven; let us not, therefore, strive for a name upon earth, but that our names may be written in heaven.

If Saul thought the honour too much which was given to David by the damsels, when they celebrated his victory in their songs, what shall it be to be celebrated by all the angels

and saints in celestial responsories? When a servant of God enters into heaven, he shall be received with such divine music, all the blessed in heaven often repeating those words in the Gospel, "Well done, good servant and true; because thou hast been faithful in a few things, thou shalt be placed over much; enter into thy Master's joy." Which words they shall repeat in quires: this shall be a song of victory and honour, above all the honours of the earth; being conferred by so great, so wise, so holy, and so authentic persons. Although the honour and applause, which the just receive in heaven, from the citizens of that holy city, be incomparable; yet that honour and respect, with which God himself shall treat them, is far above it; it is expressed in no meaner similitude than that of the honour done by the servant unto his Lord; and therefore it is said, that God himself shall, as it were, serve the blessed in heaven at their table. It is much amongst men to be seated at the table of a prince; but for a king to serve his vassal, as if he himself were his servant, who ever heard it?

David, when he caused Mephibosheth, (although the grandchild of a king, and the son of an excellent prince, unto whom David owed his life,) to sit at his table, he thought he did him a singular honour; but this favour never extended to wait on him. The honour which God bestows upon the just, exceeds all human imaginations; who, not satisfied with crowning all the blessed with his own Divinity, giving himself to be possessed and enjoyed by them for all eternity, does also honour their victories and heroic actions with new crowns [b].

The just shall shine like the stars in the firmament; and if the least saint in heaven shall shine seven times more than the sun, what shall that light be, which shall outshine so many suns [c]!

The honour of the just in heaven depends not, like that of the earth, upon accidents and reports, nor is exposed to dangers, or measured by the discourse of others; but in itself contains its own glory and dignity. The Romans erected statues unto those, whom they intended to honour, because, being mortal, there should something remain after

[b] Apoc. xxi. [c] Apoc. i. 21.

death, to make their persons and services, which they had done to the commonweal, known to posterity; but in heaven there is no need of this artifice, because those, which are there honoured, are immortal, and shall have in themselves some character engraved, as an evident and clear token of their noble victories and achievements: what greater honour than to be friends of God, sons, heirs, and kings in the realm of heaven?

St. John, in his Apocalypse, sets forth this honour of the blessed, in the twenty-four elders, who were placed about the throne of God[d]; and in that honour and majesty, as every one was seated in his presence, and that upon a throne, clothed in white garments, in sign of their perpetual joy, and crowned with a crown of gold, in respect of their dignities. To be covered in the presence of kings is the greatest honour they confer upon the chiefest grandees; but God causes his servants to be crowned and seated upon thrones before him; and our Saviour, in the day of judgment, makes his disciples his fellow judges. Certainly, greater honour cannot be imagined, than that which the just receive in heaven; for if we look upon him, who honours, it is God; if with what, with no less joy than his own Divinity, and other most sublime gifts; if before whom, before the whole theatre of heaven; if the continuance, for all eternity: therefore, let us so dispose of our lives here, and live so righteously and holily, that we may be thought worthy of that crown of glory, which he hath prepared for all those who love and serve him.

CHAP. III.

Of the Riches of the Eternal Kingdom of Heaven.

THE riches in heaven are no less than the honours; though those are, as hath been said, inestimable. There can be no greater riches than to want nothing which is good, nor to need any thing which can be desired; and in that blessed life no good shall fail, nor no desire be unsatisfied; if, as the

[d] Apoc. iv.

philosophers say, he is not rich who possesseth much, but he who desires nothing; there being in heaven no desire unaccomplished, there must needs be great riches. It was a position of the Stoics, that he was not poor who wanted, but he who was necessitated: since, then, in the celestial kingdom there is necessity of nothing, most rich is he who enters into it. By reason of these divine riches, Christ, our Saviour, when he speaks in his parables of the kingdom of heaven, doth sometimes call it, "the hidden treasure, the precious pearls;" for if divine happiness consists in the eternal possession of God, what riches may be compared with his who enjoys him? and what inheritance to that of the kingdom of heaven? and what possession more precious than the Divinity? and what more to be desired than the Creator of all things precious, who gives himself for a possession and riches unto the saints, to the end they should abhor those riches which are temporal, if by them the eternal are endangered?

Besides the possession of God, the just shall reign with Christ eternally in the kingdom of heaven; whose riches must needs be immense, since they are to be kings of so great and ample a kingdom: if the earth, compared with heaven, be but a point, and yet contains so many kingdoms; what shall that be which is but one kingdom, and yet extended over the whole heavens? Some famous mathematicians say of the imperial heaven, that it is so great, that if God should allow unto every one of the blessed a greater space than the whole earth, yet there would remain as much more to give unto others; and that the capaciousness of this heaven is so great, that it contains more than ten thousand and fourteen millions of miles. What wonder will it be to see a city so great, of so precious matter! Divines confess the capaciousness of this heaven to be immense, but are more willing to admire it, than bold to measure it[a]. It is all composed of matter far more beautiful and precious than gold, pearl, and diamonds: the heavens which we discover, with the sun and all the other stars, are but the pavement of the eternal firmament; the inhabitants thereof tread under their feet the front of the brightest stars: the sun and moon were made to

[a] Jo. Gaitér in Peregrino.

give light to this low elementary world; the heavenly Lamb is the lamp which doth lighten the eternal Sion, the mansion of glory: what shall that place be, where the saints in the light of glory see the uncreated and inaccessible light of the Deity!

It is called a kingdom, for its immense greatness; and a city, for its great beauty and population: it is full of inhabitants of all nations and conditions; where are many thousands of angels, an infinite number of the just, even as many as have died since Abel; and thither also shall repair all who are to die unto the end of the world, and after judgment shall there remain for ever, invested in their glorious bodies: neither shall this populous city be inhabited with mean and base people, but with citizens so noble, rich, and just, that all of them shall be most holy and wise kings: how happy shall it be to live with such persons! The queen of Sheba, only to see Solomon, came from the end of the earth: to behold a king issue out of his palace, all the people flock together: what shall it then be, not only to see, but to live and reign with many angels, and converse with so many eminent and holy men! If there should now descend from heaven one of the prophets or apostles, with what earnestness and admiration would every one strive to see and hear him! in the other world we shall hear and see them all: how admirable will it be to see thousand of thousands in all their beauty and greatness; and so many glorious bodies of saints in all their lustre! If one sun be sufficient to clear up the whole world here below, what joy shall it be, to behold those innumerable suns in that region of light!

This kingdom of God is not like other kingdoms, which contain huge deserts, inaccessible mountains, and thick woods; nor is it divided into many cities and villages, distant one from another; but this kingdom, although a most spacious region, is all one beautiful city: who would not wonder if all England were but one city, and that as beautiful as Rome in the time of Augustus Cæsar, who found it of brick, and left it of marble! What a sight were that of Syria, if all a Jerusalem! What shall then be the celestial city of saints, whose greatness possesses the whole heavens, and is, as the holy Scriptures describe, (to exaggerate the riches of the saints,) all of gold and precious stones! The

gates of this city were, as St. John says, one entire pearl, and the foundation of the walls jasper, sapphire, calcedon, emerald, topaz, jacinth, amethyst, and other most precious stones: the streets of fine gold, so pure as it seemed crystal, joining in one substance the firmness of gold and transparency of crystal; and the beauty both of one and the other: if all England were of sapphire, how would it amaze the world? How marvellous then will the holy city be, which, though extended over so many millions of leagues, is all of gold, pearl, and precious stones; or, to say better, of a matter of far more value, and peopled with such a multitude of beautiful citizens, who are as far above any imaginable number, as the capacity of the city is above any imaginable measure.

Of those incomparable riches, the blessed are not only to be lords, but kings; neither is this celestial measure, or this kingdom of heaven, less or poorer by having so many lords and kings; it is not like the kingdoms on earth, which permit but one king at once; and if divided, become of less power and majesty; but is of such condition, that it is wholly possessed by all in general, and by each one in particular; like the sun, which warms all and every one, and not one less because it warms many: the effects of riches are much greater and more noble in heaven, than they can be upon earth: wealth may serve us here to maintain our power, honours, and delights: but all the gold in the world cannot free us from weakness, infamy, or pain; it cannot make a calenture not to afflict us, or that the pains of the head or gout do not molest us, or that cares and fears shall not break our sleep: this only is to be had in heaven; where their power is so free from weakness, that one only angel, without army, guns, swords, or lance, could destroy at once one hundred and eighty thousand[b].

Besides, it is to be considered, that the great riches of the saints are not like those of the kings of the earth, drawn from the tributes imposed upon their vassals, which, though just, yet are not free from this ill condition; that what enricheth the prince, impoverishes the subject: the riches in heaven have no such blemish, they are burdensome to none; and what is given unto the servants of Christ, who reign in heaven, is not taken from any.

[b] Reg. iv. 19.

If all the earth were of gold, and all the rivers of balsam, and all the rocks of precious stones, wouldst thou not say, that this is a great treasure? Know, that a treasure, which exceeds gold as far as gold doth dirt,—balsam, water,—or precious stones, pebbles,—remains as a reward for the just.

Wherefore we ought to lift up our souls, and alienate our affections from the frail felicity of these temporal goods of the earth, and say, with David, "Glorious things are said of thee, thou city of God; whatsoever pains and poverty we suffer here, we shall receive in glory so much the greater riches."

How poor and narrow a heart must that Christian have, who confines his love to things present, sweating and toiling for a small part of the goods of this world, which itself is so little! Why doth he content himself with some patch of the earth, when he may be lord of the whole heavens! Let us not, therefore, who are to die to-morrow, afflict ourselves for that which may perish sooner than we: let us not toil to enjoy that which we are shortly to leave, but let us lay up our treasures in heaven, that kingdom of the blessed, where the riches, joys, and comforts are eternal, and can never be taken from us: I will, therefore, study to use this world with indifference, and shall not be puffed up when things succeed happily; nor dejected, when they fall out crossly, but shall bless God in all conditions; whether I abound or want, whether rich or poor, I will bless the Lord at all times; his praises shall be ever in my mouth: I shall never complain of the necessities of this life, since, though all things fail me, the means of my salvation will not fail me; for even that want may be a means to obtain it.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Greatness of Eternal Pleasures.

Honour, profit, and pleasures, are distinct goods upon earth, and are rarely found together; honour is seldom a companion of profit, or profit of pleasure; and so the sick man drinks his purge, because it is profitable, how bitter soever: the pleasures of the world are, for the most part,

mixed with some shame, and oftentimes with infamy; they are costly and expensive, we cannot entertain our pleasures without diminishing our wealth; it is not so in eternal goods, in which to be honest is to be profitable, and to be profitable delectable; eternal honours are accompanied with immense riches, and they are both attended by pleasures without end. All this is signified by the Lord, when he received the faithful servant into glory, when he said, "Well done, good servant and true; because thou hast been faithful in few things, I will place thee over many; enter into the joy of thy Lord:" first he honours him, commending him for a good and faithful servant; then enriches him, delivering many things into his hands; and so admits him into the joy and pleasure of his Lord; thereby signifying the greatness of this joy, not saying that this joy should enter into him, but that he should enter into joy, and into no other but that of his Lord: so great is the joy of that celestial Paradise, that it wholly fills and embraces the blessed souls, which enter into heaven, as into an immense sea of pleasure and delight. The joys of the earth enter into the hearts of those who possess them, but fill them not; because the capacity of man's heart is greater than they can satisfy; but the joys of heaven in the blessed enter into themselves, and fill and overflow them in all parts.

The multitude of joys in heaven is joined with their greatness; and so great they are, that the very least of them is sufficient to make us forget the greatest contents of the earth; and so many they are, as that though a thousand times shorter, yet they would exceed all temporal pleasures, though a thousand times longer; but joining the abundance of those eternal joys with their immense greatness, that eternal bliss becomes ineffable: so great are the joys of heaven, that all the arithmeticians of the earth cannot number them; the geometricians cannot measure them; nor the most learned in the world explicate them[a]: the just shall rejoice in what is above them, which is the vision of God; in what is below them, which is the beauty of heaven, and the blessed souls; in what is within them, which is the glorification of their bodies; in what is with them, which is the company of

[a] 1 Cor. ii. Isaiah, lxiv.

angels, and men made perfect: God shall feast all their senses with unspeakable delight, for he shall be their object; and shall be a mirror to the sight, music to the ear, sweetness to the taste, balsam to the smell, flowers to the touch; there shall be the clear light of summer, the pleasantness of the spring, the abundance of autumn, and the repose of winter.

The principal joy of the blessed is in the possession of God, whom they behold clearly as he is in himself; for as honourable, profitable, and delectable, are not divided in heaven, so the blessed souls have three gifts, essential and inseparable from that happy state, which correspond to those three kinds of blessings, which the learned call vision, comprehension, and fruition: the first consists in the clear and distinct sight of God, which is given to the just, by which he receives an incomparable honour, since his works and virtues are rewarded in the presence of the angels with no less a crown and recompense than is God himself: the second is the possession which the soul hath of God, as of his riches and inheritance; the third is the ineffable joy which accompanies this sight and possession; which is so great, that neither the blessed themselves, who have experience of it, nor the angels in heaven, are able to declare it. This joy hath two singular qualities, by which we may, in some sort, conceive the immensity of it; the first, that it is so powerful that it excludes all evil, pains, and grief: this only is so great a good, that many of the philosophers held it for the chief felicity of man; but herein was their error, that they judged that to be good, itself, which was but an effect or consequence of it: for so powerful is that love and joy which springs from the clear vision of God, that it is sufficient to convert hell into glory; insomuch as, if to the most tormented soul in hell were added all the torments of the rest of the damned, both men and devils, and that God should vouchsafe him but one glimpse of his knowledge, that only clear vision, though in the lowest degree, were sufficient to free him from all those evils, both of sin and pain; there is no joy in this world so intense, which can suspend the grief we suffer from a finger that is sawing off; griefs do more easily bereave us of the sense of pleasures, than pleasures do of pains; yet such is the greatness of that

sovereign joy in heaven, that it alone is sufficient to drown all the grief and torments, both in earth and hell: and there is no pain in the world able to diminish the least part of it.

All those joys of the blessed, both in soul and body, which are innumerable, have their source and original from that unspeakable joy of the clear vision of God.

And how can the joy be less which proceeds from such a cause, who gives himself to be possessed by man; that joy being the very same which God enjoys, and which suffices to make God himself blessed, with a blessedness equal to himself. Therefore, not without great mystery, it is said, "Enter into the joy of thy Lord." It is not said, simply, into joy; but to determine the greatness of it, it was his own joy, that joy by which he himself becomes happy.

We are to consider, that there is nothing in this world, which hath not for its end some manner of perfection. And that those things which are capable of reason and knowledge, have, in that perfection, a particular joy and complacency; which joy is greater or lesser, according as that end is more or less perfect. Since, therefore, the Divine perfection is infinitely greater than that of all the creatures, the joy of God, which is in himself, (for he hath no end or perfection distinct from himself,) is infinitely greater than that of all things besides: this joy, out of his infinite goodness, he hath been pleased to make the holy angels and blessed souls partakers of, communicating unto the just his own felicity. Therefore, the joy of saints, which is that of the beatifical vision, wherein consists the joy and happiness of God, must needs be infinite and ineffable; and all the happiness and contents of this world, in respect of it, are bitter as aloes or wormwood. By how much a delectable object is more nearly and straitly united to the faculty, by so much greater is the joy and delight which it produces: therefore God, who is the most excellent and delightful object, being, in the beatifical vision, united to the soul with the most intimate union that can be in a pure creature, must necessarily cause a most inexplicable joy, incomparably greater than all the joys, real or imaginable, which can be produced by the creatures now existent, or possible. For as the Divine perfection encloseth within itself all the perfections

of things created, possible and imaginable; so the joy, which it causeth in the souls of the blessed, must be infinitely greater than all other joys, which either have or can be caused by the creature. If there were in the world a man as wise as an angel, we should all desire to see him, as the queen of Sheba did Solomon; but if to this wisdom were joined the strength of Sampson, the victories of Maccabeus, the affability of David, the friendliness of Jonathan, the liberality of the emperor Titus, and to all this the beauty and comeliness of Absalom; who would not love, and desire to live and converse with this admirable person? Why, then, do we not love the sight of God, in whom all those perfections and graces are infinitely united, and which we ourselves, if we serve him, are to enjoy, as if they were our own?

O how great and delightful a theatre shall it be to see God, as he is with all his infinite perfections, and the perfections of all creatures, which are eminently contained in the Deity. How admirable were that spectacle, where were represented all that are, or have been, pleasant or admirable in the world! If one were placed where he might behold the seven wonders of the world, the sumptuous banquets made by Ahasuerus, the rare shows exhibited by the Romans, the wealth of Crœsus, the Assyrian and Roman monarchs, and all these jointly together, who would not be transported with joy and wonder at so admirable a sight? But more happy were he, upon whom all these were bestowed, together with a thousand years of life, wherein to enjoy them: yet all these were nothing, in respect of the beatifical vision of God, in whom those, and all the perfections, that either are, or have been, or possibly can be, are contained: whatever else is great and delightful in the world, together with all the pleasure and perfections, that all the men of the world have obtained, or shall obtain to the world's end; all the wisdom of Solomon, all the sciences of Plato and Aristotle, or all the strength of Aristomenes and Milo, all the beauty of Paris and Adonis; if they should give all these to one person, it would have no comparison, and would seem a loathsome thing, being compared only to the delight which will be enjoyed in seeing God for all eternity; because in him will be seen a theatre of bliss and greatness, wherein is com-

prised, as in one, the greatness of all creatures. In him will be found all the riches of gold, the delightfulness of the meadows, the brightness of the sun, the pleasantness of music, the beauty of the heavens, the comfortable smell of amber, the contentedness of all the senses, and all that can be either admired or enjoyed.

To this may be added, that this inestimable joy of the vision of God, is to be multiplied into innumerable other joys; into as many as there are blessed spirits and souls, which shall enjoy the sight of God; in regard every one is to have a particular contentment of the bliss of every one; and because the blessed spirits and souls are innumerable, the joys likewise of every one, will be innumerable. For, as every saint shall love another equally as himself, so he shall receive equal joy from his happiness to that of his own: and if he shall rejoice in the happiness of those equal unto himself, how much shall he rejoice in the happiness of God, whom he loves better than himself?

Let us, therefore, rejoice, who are Christians, unto whom so great blessings are promised; let us rejoice that heaven was made for us, and let this hope banish all sadness from our hearts; let those grieve and be melancholy, who have no hope of heaven, and not we, unto whom Christ hath promised the blessedness of his glory. Let this hope comfort us, this joy refresh us; and let us now begin to enjoy that here, which we are ever hereafter to possess; for hope is an anticipation of joy; upon this we ought to place all our thoughts, turning our eyes from all the goods and delights of the earth. From hence I will shut up the windows of my senses; the things of the earth seeming unto me unworthy to be looked upon after the contemplation of the heavenly, in the hope whereof I will only rejoice.

THE PRAYER.

O Father of light, grant me the light of thy glory; that one day I may clearly see that, which I now believe by the light of faith. O eternal Word, bestow thyself upon me, that I may possess in heaven, that which I see by hope upon earth. O Holy Ghost, make me partaker of thine infinite beauty; to the end I may one day enjoy that,

which I now embrace by charity. Lord, I am wholly thine, be thou wholly mine; thou art my eternity, thou art my salvation and hope; grant, Lord, that I may praise thee everlastingly. I desire nothing in heaven or earth, but thyself; for thou art the God of my heart, and the only part which I pretend unto in the eternity of eternities.

CHAPTER V.

The Excellency and Happiness of the Souls and Bodies of the Just, in the Life Eternal.

When the Hebrews would express a blessed person, they did not call him "blessed," in the singular; but "blessings," in the abstract and plural; and so, in the first Psalm, in place of "beatus," the Hebrews say, "beatitudes;" and, certainly, with much reason; since the blessed enjoy as many blessings as they have powers or senses; blessings in their understanding, will, and memory; blessings in their sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. The understanding shall live there, with a clear and supreme wisdom; the will, with an inflamed love; the memory, with an eternal representation of the good which is past; the senses, with a continual delectation in their objects. Finally; all that is man, shall live in a perpetual joy, comfort, and blessedness.

And to begin with the life and joy of the understanding: the blessed, besides that supreme and clear knowledge of the Creator, shall know the Divine mysteries, the secrets of Providence, the frame and making of the world, the whole artifice of nature, the motions of the stars, the properties of the planets, and of all created entities; all which they shall not only know jointly and in mass, but clearly and distinctly, without confusion. This shall be the life of the understanding, which shall feast itself with so high and certain truths. The knowledge of the greatest wise men and philosophers of the world, even in things natural, is full of ignorance and deceit; because they know not the substance of things, but through the shell of accidents; so as the most simple peasant, arriving at the height of glory, shall be re-

plenished with a knowledge, in respect of which the wisdom of Solomon and Aristotle were but ignorance and barbarism.

What content were it to behold all the wise men of the world, and the principal inventors, and masters of sciences and faculties, met together in one room; Adam, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, Zoroaster, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Homer, Trismegistus, Solon, Lycurgus, Hippocrates, Euclid, Archimedes, and all the doctors of the church! How venerable were this junto! How admirable this assembly! And what journies would men make to behold them! If, then, to see such imperfect scraps of knowledge, divided amongst so many men, would cause so great admiration; what shall be the joy of the blessed, when each particular person shall see his own understanding furnished with that true and perfect wisdom, whereof all theirs is but a shadow? Who can express the joy they shall receive by the knowledge of so many truths? What contentment would it be to one, if at once they should shew unto him whatever there is, and what is done in the whole earth? The fair buildings; the fruit-trees, of so great diversity; all living creatures, of so great variety; all the birds, the fishes, the metals so rich; all people and nations, farthest remote? Certainly, it would be a sight of wonderful satisfaction. But what will it be to see all this; whatsoever there is in the earth, together with all that there is in heaven and above heaven? Some philosophers, in the discovery of a natural truth, or the invention of some rare curiosity, have been transported with a greater joy and content, than their senses were capable of. For this, Aristotle spent so many sleepless nights; for this, Pythagoras travelled into so many strange nations; for this, Crates deprived himself of all his wealth; and Archimedes never removed his thoughts, night nor day, from the inquisition of some mathematical demonstration. He spent many days in finding out, by his mathematical riches, how much gold would serve to gild a crown of silver; and having found it, he fetched divers skips, and cried out, "I have found it, I have found it!" If, then, the finding out of so mean a truth, could so transport this great artist; what joy shall the saints receive, when God shall discover unto them those high secrets, and, above all, that sublime mystery of the trinity of persons in the unity of essence? The blessed

shall receive more knowledge in one instant, than the wise of the world have obtained, with all their watchings, travels, and experiences. Aristotle, for the great love he bore to knowledge, held, that the chief felicity of man consisted in contemplation. If he found so great joy in natural speculation, what shall we find in Divine, and the clear vision of God? As the understanding shall be applied to the prime truth, which is God himself; so shall the beatified will be inseparably joined to the essence of the Divine goodness. There shall the memory also live, representing unto us the Divine benefits, and rendering eternal thanks unto the Author of all. The soul, rejoicing in its own happiness, to have received so great mercies for so small merits; and, remembering the dangers from which it hath been freed by Divine favour, it shall sing that verse in the Psalm: "The snare is broken, and we are delivered." The remembrance of the acts of virtue and good works shall be a particular joy unto the blessed; both in respect they were a means of our happiness, as also of pleasing so gracious and good a Lord.

In heaven, we shall not only joy in the memory of those things, wherein we have pleased God, in complying with his holy will, and in ordering and disposing our life in his service; but in the troubles, also, and dangers we have past. The memory of death is bitter to those who are to die; but unto the just, who have already passed it, and are secure in heaven, nothing can be more pleasant, who now, to their unspeakable joy, know themselves to be free from death, infirmity, and danger.

There, also, shall live the will, rejoicing to see all its desires accomplished, with the abundance and sweet society of so many felicities; being necessitated to love so admirable a beauty, as the soul enjoys and possesses in God Almighty. Love makes all things sweet; and, as it is a torment to be separated from what one loves, so it is a great joy and felicity to remain with the beloved: and, therefore, the blessed, loving God more than themselves, how unspeakable a comfort must it be to enjoy God, and the society of those whom they so much affect? The love of the mother makes her delight more in the sight of her own son, though foul and of worse conditions, than that of his neighbours. The love, then, of the saints, one towards another, being greater than

that of mothers to their children; and every one of them being so perfect and worthy to be beloved; and every one enjoying the sight of the same God, how comfortable must be their conversation! Seneca said, that the possession of what good soever, was not pleasing without a partner: the possession, then, of the chief good, must be much more delightful with the society of such excellent companions. If a man were to remain alone for many years in some beautiful palace, it would not please him so well as a desert with company; but the city of God is full of most noble citizens, who are all sharers of the same blessedness. This conversation, also, being with wise and holy personages, shall much increase their joy; for if one of the greatest troubles of human life be, to suffer the ill conditions, follies, and impertinences of rude and ill-bred people; and the greatest content, to converse with sweet, pious, and learned friends; what shall that Divine conversation be in heaven, where there is none ill-conditioned, none impious, none froward, but at peace, piety, love, and sweetness! Every one shall then rejoice, as much in the felicity of another, as in his own ineffable joy; and shall possess as many joys as he shall find companions. There are all things which are necessary or delightful, all riches, ease, and comfort. Where God is, nothing is wanting; all there know God without error, behold him without end, praise him without weariness, love him without tediousness, and in this love repose themselves in God. Besides all this, the security which the will shall have, in the eternal possession of this felicity, is an unspeakable joy. The fear, that the good things which we enjoy are to end, or at least may end, mingle wormwood with our joys; and pleasures do not relish where there is danger: but this celestial happiness being eternal, neither shall nor can end, diminish, or be endangered; but, with this security, adds a new joy unto those others of the saints.

Besides the powers of the soul, the senses also shall live, nourished with the food of most proportionable and delightful objects; the eyes shall ever be recreated with the light of the most glorious and beautiful bodies of the saints: one sun suffices to cheer up the whole world; what joy, then, shall one of the blessed conceive, in beholding as many suns as there are saints, and in seeing himself one of them?

But, above all, with what content and admiration shall we behold the glorious body of Christ, our Redeemer; in comparison of whose splendour, that of all the saints shall be as darkness; from whose wounds shall issue forth rays of a particular brightness! Besides all this, the glory and greatness of the empyreal heaven, and the lustre of that celestial city, shall infinitely delight the blessed citizens: the ears shall be filled with most harmonious music, as may be gathered from many places of the Scripture. If the harp of David delighted Saul so much, as it assuaged the fury of his passions, cast forth devils, and freed him of that melancholy, whereof the wicked spirit made use; and that the lyre of Orpheus wrought such wonders, both with men and beasts; what shall the harmony of heaven do! What delight then will it be, not only to hear the voice of one instrument played upon by an angel, but all the voices of thousands of angels, together with the admirable melody of musical instruments! What sweetness will it be, to hear so many heavenly musicians, those millions of angels, which will be sounding forth their hallelujahs, unto the great God of heaven and earth! O how I desire to be freed from this body, that I might hear and enjoy it! Happy were I, and for ever happy, if, after death, I might hear the melody of those hymns and hallelujahs, which the citizens of that celestial habitation, and the squadrons of those blessed spirits, sing in praise of the eternal King. This is that sweet music, which St. John heard in the Apocalypse, when the inhabitants of heaven sang, "Let all the world bless thee, O Lord! to thee be given all honour and dominion, for a world of worlds. Amen."

The smell shall be feasted with the odour, which issues from those beautiful bodies, more sweet than music or amber; and from the whole heaven, more fragrant than jessamines or roses.

The taste, also, in that blessed country, shall not want the delight of its proper object; for although the saints shall not there feed, which were to necessitate that happy state unto something besides itself; yet they shall have the delight of meat, without the trouble of eating, by reason of the great delicacy of this celestial taste. The glory of the saints is often signified in holy Scripture, under the names of a supper, banquet, manna. It cannot be expressed, how great shall be

the delight and sweetness of taste, which eternally shall be found in heaven. If Esau sold his birth-right for a dish of lentil-pottage, well may we mortify our taste here upon earth, that we may enjoy that perfect and incomparable one in heaven.

The touch, also, shall there receive a most delightful entertainment; all they tread upon, shall seem unto the just to be flowers; and the whole dispositions of their bodies shall be ordered with a most exquisite temperature: for as the torments of the damned in hell are most expressed in that sense, so the bodies of the blessed in heaven shall, in that sense, receive a special joy and refreshment. And as the heat of that infernal fire, without light, is to penetrate even to the entrails of those miserable persons; so the brightness of the celestial light is to penetrate the bodies of the blessed, and fill them with an incomparable delight and sweetness; all and every part of the body, in general and particular, shall be sensible of a most admirable pleasure and content.

The humanity of Christ, our Redeemer, is to be the chief and principal joy of all the senses; and, therefore, as the intellectual knowledge of the divinity of Christ, is the joy and essential reward of the soul; so the sensitive knowledge of the humanity of Christ, is the chief and essential joy of the senses, and the utmost end and felicity whereunto they can aspire. This, it seems, was meant by our Saviour, in St. John; where, speaking unto the Father, he said, "This is life eternal," that is, essential blessedness, "that they know thee, the only true God," (in which is included the essential glory of the soul,) "and Him, whom thou hast sent," Jesus Christ; in which is included the essential blessedness of the senses.

It is also much to be observed, that the blessed souls shall be crowned with some particular joys, which the very angels are not capable of; for they only shall receive the crown of martyrdom, since no angel can have the glory to have shed his blood, and died for Christ; neither to have overcome the flesh, and by combats and wrestlings subjected it unto reason. Men shall have the glory of their bodies, and joy of their senses, which the angels cannot; for, as they want the one joy of the Spirit, which is the flesh, so they must want the glory of the victory. Neither shall they have

this great joy of mankind, in being redeemed by Christ from sin, and from as many damnations into hell, as they have committed sins; and to see themselves now freed and secure from that horrid evil; and so many enemies of the soul, which they had, which must needs produce a most unspeakable joy.

The souls of the blessed shall not only be glorious, but their very bodies shall be filled with glory, and invested with a light seven times brighter than that of the sun; for, although it be said in the Gospel, "That the just shall shine as the sun;" yet Isaiah, the prophet, says, "That the sun, in those days, shall shine seven times more than it now doth." This light being the most beautiful and excellent of corporeal qualities, shall clothe the just, as with a garment of most exceeding lustre and glory. What emperor was ever clad in such a purple? What human majesty ever cast forth beams of such splendour?

Herod, upon the day of his greatest magnificence, could only clothe himself in a robe of silver, admirably wrought, which did not shine of itself, but by reflection of the sunbeams, which then, in his rising, cast his rays upon it; and yet this little glittering was sufficient to make the people to salute him as a god. What admiration shall it then cause, to behold the glorious body of a saint, not clothed in gold and purple, not adorned with diamonds or rubies, but more resplendent than the sun itself! Put all the brightest diamonds together, all the fairest rubies, all the most beautiful carbuncles; let an imperial robe be embroidered with them all; all this will be no more than as coals, in respect of a glorious body, which shall be all transparent, bright, and resplendent, far more than if it were set with diamonds. The garments which we wear here, how rich soever, are rather an affront and disgrace unto us, than an ornament; since they argue an imperfection, and a necessity of our bodies, which we are forced to supply with something of another nature. Besides, our clothes were given as a mark of Adam's fall in Paradise, and we wear them as a penance enjoined for his sin. What fool is so sottish, as to bestow precious trimming upon a penitential garment?

But such are not the ornaments of the saints in heaven; their lustre is their own, not borrowed from their garments,

but within themselves; each part of them being more transparent than crystal, and brighter than the sun. It is recounted in the Apocalypse, as a great wonder, "That a woman was seen clothed with the sun, and crowned with twelve stars." This, indeed, was far more glorious than any ornament upon earth; yet this is short of the ornament of the saints, whose lustre is proper to themselves, intrinsically their own, not taken and borrowed from something without them, as was that of the woman's. The state and majesty with which this gift of splendour shall adorn the saints, shall be incomparably greater than that of the mightiest kings. It were a great majesty in a prince, when he issues forth of his palace by night, to be attended by a thousand pages, each having a lighted torch; but were those torches stars, it were nothing to the state and glory of a saint in heaven, who carries with him a light equal to that of the sun seven times doubled; and what greater glory, than not to need the sun, which the whole world needs? Where the just is, there shall be no night; for wheresoever he goes, he carries the day along with him. St. Paul, beholding the gift of clarity in the humanity of Christ, remained for some days without sense or motion. St. John, only beholding it in the face of our Saviour, fell down as if dead; his mortal eyes being not able to endure the lustre of so great a majesty. St. Peter, because he saw something of it in the transfiguration of Christ, was so transported with the glory of the place, that he had a desire to have continued there for ever. What sight more glorious, than to behold so many saints, like so many suns, to shine with so incomparable lustre and beauty!

What light, then, will that of heaven be, proceeding from so many lights; or, to speak more properly, from so many suns! How great, then, shall the clarity of that holy city be, where many suns do inhabit! And if, by the sight of every one in particular, their joy shall be more augmented; by the sight of a number without number, what measure can that joy have which results from so beautiful a spectacle!

The bodies of the saints, endowed with this light, which they receive from the gift of clarity, are impassible, and cannot suffer from any thing. They have an agility to move from place to place with speed and subtilty, like light; to

have their way free and pervious through all places, and can penetrate wheresoever they please.

By this gift of impassibility their bodies are freed from all miseries, which our bodies now suffer; the cold of winter, the heat of summer, infirmities, griefs, tears, and the necessity of eating, which one necessity includes many others: let us but consider what cares and troubles men undergo only to sustain their lives: the labourer spends his days in plowing, sowing, and reaping; the shepherd suffers cold and heat in watching of his flock: what dangers are past in all estates, only to be sure to eat! from all which the gift of impassibility exempts the just. The care of clothing troubles us also little less than that of feeding, and that of preserving the health much more; for as our necessities are doubly increased by sickness, so are our cares; from all which he, who is impassible, is free; and not only from the griefs and pain of this life, but, if he should enter into hell, it would not burn one hair of him. The gift of agility is most great, which easily appears by the troubles and inconveniences of a long journey, which, howsoever we are accommodated, is not performed without much weariness, and oftentimes with danger, both of health and life: a king, though he pass in a coach or litter, after the most easy and commodious way of travelling, must pass over rocks, hills, and rivers, and spend much time; but with the gift of agility, the glorious bodies of the saints, in the twinkling of an eye, can traverse all the heavens, visit the earth, return unto the sun and firmament, and observe what is above the stars, in the empyreal heaven. To this noble gift of agility shall be annexed that of subtilty, by which their glorious bodies shall have their way free and pervious through all places; no impediment shall obstruct their motion; there shall be no enclosure or prison to them: they shall, with greater ease, pass through the middle of a rock, than an arrow through the air: Christ showed the subtilty of his glorious body, while he issued out of his tomb, not opening it; and entered into the hall where the apostles were, the gates being shut.

Finally, the servants of Christ shall be there so replenished with all goods, both of soul and body, that there shall be nothing more for them to desire: what wouldest thou,

then, my body? what is it thou desirest, my soul? in heaven you shall find all you desire: if you are pleased with beauty, there the just shine as the sun; if you are pleased with any delight, there is not only one, but a sea of pleasure, which God keeps in store for the blessed, wherewith it shall quench their thirst; I will then, from henceforth, raise my desires unto that place, where only they can be accomplished; I will not be ambitious after things of the earth, which cannot satisfy me, but I will look after those in heaven, which are only great, only eternal, and can only fill the capacity of my heart.

What an advantageous bargain would it be, if one could buy a kingdom for a straw? Yet so it is; for that which is no more than a straw, we may purchase the kingdom of heaven: certainly all the felicity, riches, and earthly delights are no more than a straw, compared with the glory of heaven. How foolish would he be, who, having a basket full of chips, would not give one of them for an hundred weight of gold? This is the vanity of man, who, for earthly goods, will not receive those of heaven.

If men undergo and suffer such hazards for a kingdom, which is momentary, and that not for themselves, but for another; what ought we to do for those eternal riches, which are to be our own, and for the kingdom of heaven, wherein we expect such immense honours, riches, and pleasures? Let us take courage; it is the kingdom of heaven we hope for; joys, riches, and honours eternal, are those which are promised us: what pity is it, that for some short pleasure, we should lose joys so great and eternal? Because we will not bear some slight injury here, should be deprived of celestial honour there? For not restoring what we have unjustly taken, should forfeit the Divine riches of heaven? That which the world offers in her best pleasures, is but shells, offals, and parings; but that whereunto God invites, is a full table; for which reason it is called, in Scripture, the great supper, not a dinner; because, after dinner, we use to rise and go about other occasions and employments; but after supper there are no more labours, all is rest and repose: the principal dish, which is served in at this great supper, is the clear vision of God, and all his Divine perfections; after that, a thousand joys of the soul, in all its powers and

faculties; then a thousand pleasures of the senses, with all the endowments of a glorified body: those latter are, as it were, the dessert of this Divine banquet; and if the dessert be such, what shall be the substance of the feast?

THE PRAYER.

My Lord, my God, when shall I see the day, the happy day, in which I shall come and appear in thy heavenly mansion, to eat and drink with thee in thy kingdom, and to sit at thy table; there to behold the majesty of thy glory, which is the only object of my eternal bliss! O thou resplendent Star of the East, let thy eternal light shine in the horizon of my soul, then all these thick vapours of terrene affections will be dispersed. Lord, I have placed all my hopes in eternity; I find no more rest here, in these short moments, than the dove of the deluge did upon the waters. O God, thou art my eternal felicity; to thee be glory, honour, and thanksgiving, for ever, for evermore. Amen.

CHAP. VI.

Considerations of eternal Evils, and of the miserable State of the Damned.

THE evils of hell are truly evils, and so purely such, that they have no mixture of good; in that place of unhappiness, all is eternal sorrow and complaint; there is no room for comfort, there shall not be the least good which may give ease; nor shall there want a concourse of all evils which may add affliction: no good is to be found there, where all goods are wanting; neither can there be want of any evil, where all evils whatsoever are to be found; and by the want of all good, and the collection of all evils, every evil is augmented. In the creation of the world, God gave a praise to every nature, saying, "It was good:" but when all were created and joined together, he said, "they were very good:" because the conjunction of many goods, advances the good of each particular; and, in the same manner, the conjunction of many evils makes them all worse: what shall heaven then

be, where there is a concourse of all goods, and no evils? and what hell, where there are all evils, and no good? Certainly the one must be exceeding good, and the other exceeding evil. In hell there is the pain of loss, and that so rigorous, that, in depriving the damned soul of one only thing, they take from him all good things; for they deprive him of God, in whom they are all comprised: he who is condemned, by human laws, to the loss of his goods, may, if he live, gain others, at least in another kingdom, if he fly thither; but he who is deprived of God, where shall he find another God? and who can fly from hell? God is the greatest good, and it is, therefore, the greatest evil to be deprived of him, because evil is the privation of good; and that is to be esteemed the greatest evil, which is a privation of the greatest good, which is God; and must certainly, therefore, cause more grief and resentment in the damned, than all the punishments and torments of hell besides: and in regard there is in hell an eternal privation of God, who is the chief good; the pains of loss, whereby one is deprived for ever of the greatest of all goods, this privation will cause the greatest pain and torment. If the burning of a hand cause an insufferable pain, if a bone displaced or out of joint causeth intolerable grief, how shall he be tormented, and what pains shall he suffer, who is eternally separated from God, who is the chief end for which man was created? I dare confidently say, the loss of heaven, and the omission of glory, is far more bitter than all those pains which are to be suffered in hell: and this is such a loss that the sinner shall be deprived even of the hope of what is good, and shall be left for ever in that profound poverty and necessity, without expectation of remedy or relief; and what greater want can any one have, than to want all things, and even hope of obtaining any thing? We are amazed at the poverty of holy Job, who, from a prince and a rich man, came to lie upon a dunghill, having nothing left but a piece of a broken pot to scrape away the putrefaction from his sores; but even this shall fail the damned, who would take it for a great regale, to have a dunghill for their bed, instead of the burning coals of that eternal fire. The rich glutton in the Gospel, accustomed to drink in cups of crystal, to eat in silver, and to be clothed in silks and curious linen, can tell us how far

this infernal poverty extends, when he demanded not wines of Cadiz, but a little cold water, and that not in cups of gold or crystal, but upon the finger's end of a leper: this rich glutton came to such an extremity, that he would esteem it a great felicity that they would give him one drop of water, although it was from the filthy and loathsome finger of a leper; and yet this was also wanting to him. Let the rich of the world see to what poverty they are like to come; if they trust in their riches, let them know they shall be condemned to the loss of all which is good; let them reflect upon him who was accustomed to be clothed in precious garments, to tread upon carpets, to sleep upon down, to dwell in spacious palaces, now naked, thrown upon burning coals, and packed up in some narrow corner of that infernal dungeon.

And this poverty, or want of all good, of the damned, is accompanied with a most opprobrious infamy and dishonour, when, by public sentence, they shall be deprived, for their enormous offences, of eternal glory, and reprehended in the presence of saints and angels by the Lord of heaven and earth. A most intolerable thing is hell, and most horrible are the torments; yet if one should place a thousand hells before me, nothing could be so horrible unto me, as to be excluded from the honour of glory, to be hated of Christ, and to hear from him these words, "I know you not."

This infamy we may, in some sort, declare, under the example of a mighty king, who, having no heir to succeed him in his kingdom, took up a beautiful boy at the church-door, and nourished him as his son, and, in his testament, commanded, that if at ripe years his conditions were virtuous and suitable to his calling, he should be received as lawful king, and seated in his royal throne; but if he proved vicious and unfit for government, they should punish him with infamy, and send him to the gallies: the kingdom obeyed this command, provided him excellent tutors; but he became so untoward and ill inclined, that he would learn nothing, flung away his books, spent his time amongst other boys, in making houses of dirt, and other fooleries; for which his governors chastised him, and advised him of what was fitting, and most imported him; but all did no good, only when they reprehended him, he would weep; not because he

repented, but because they hindered his sport; and the next day did the same. The more he grew in age, the worse he became; and although they informed him of the king's testament, and what behoved him, all was to no purpose; until at last, all being weary of his ill conditions, declared him unworthy to reign, despoiled him of his royal ornaments, and condemned him, with infamy, unto the gallies. What greater ignominy can there be than this, to lose a kingdom, and to be made a galley-slave?

More ignominious, and a more lamentable tragedy, is that of a Christian condemned to hell; who was taken by God from the gates of death, adopted his son, with condition, that if he kept his commandments, he should reign in heaven; and if not, he should be condemned to hell: but he, forgetting those obligations, without respect of his tutors or masters, who exhorted him both by their doctrine and example, what was fitting for a child of God: yet he, neither moved by their advice, nor the chastisements of heaven, by which God overthrew his vain intentions, and thwarted his unlawful pleasures, only lamented his temporal losses, and not his offences; and, at the time of his death, was sentenced to be deprived of the kingdom of heaven, and precipitated into hell: what infamy can be greater than this of the damned soul?

If it be a great infamy to suffer death by human justice, for some crimes committed, how great an infamy will it be to be condemned by Divine justice, for a traitor and perfidious rebel to God? Besides this bitterness of pains, the damned persons shall be eternally branded with the infamy of their offences! so that they shall be scorned and scoffed at by the devils themselves; men and angels shall detest them, as infamous and wicked traitors to their King, God, and Redeemer; and as fugitive slaves are marked and cauterized with burning irons, so this infamy, by some mark of ugliness and deformity, shall be stamped upon their faces and bodies [a]. So ignominious shall be the body of a sinner, that when his soul returns to enter it, it shall be amazed to behold it so terrible, and shall wish it were rather in the same state, as when it was half eaten up with worms.

[a] Isaiah, xiii.

And that which adds misery to their calamity, they shall be banished from heaven, and made prisoners in the profound bowels of the earth, a place most remote from heaven, and the most calamitous of all others, where they shall neither see the sun by day, nor the stars by night, where all shall be horror and darkness[b], a land covered with the obscurity of death, a land of sulphur and burning pitch[c], a land of pestilence and corruption: into this land of punishment and torments shall be banished the enemies of God.

What a grief will it be to see themselves deprived of the palaces of heaven, the society of saints, and that happy country of the living, where all is peace, charity, and joy; where all shines, all pleases, and all parts resound with hallelujahs? If the damned had no other punishment, than to see themselves banished amongst devils, into a place not far distant from heaven, sad as night, without the sight or comfort of sun or moon for all eternity, it were a torment unsufferable.

It was a great tyranny in Alexander, after he had cut off the nose, ears, and lips of Callisthenes, to cast so worthy a person into a dungeon, only accompanied with a dog[d]; a spectacle indeed lamentable, to see so discreet a man used like a brute, and not have the company of one who might comfort him; but the damned would take it for a favour to have the company of dogs or lions, rather than that of their own parents.

The tyrants of Japonia invented a strange torment for those who confessed Christ; they hung them with their heads downwards, half their bodies into a hole digged in the earth, which they filled with snakes, lizards, and other poisonous vermin; but even those were better companions, than those infernal dragons of the pit of hell, whereunto not half, but the whole body, of the miserable sinner shall be plunged. The Romans, when they punished any as a parricide, to express the heinousness of the fact, shut him up in a sack with a serpent, an ape, and a cock: what a horror shall it be in hell, when a damned person shall be shut up with so many millions of devils! Here none will live near a pest-house, or ill neighbour; think upon what neighbours there

[b] Job, x. [c] Isa. xxxiv. [d] Senec. Suidas.

are in hell. Cato counselled those who were to take a farm, to have a special care what neighbours it had. Themistocles, being to sell a certain manor, caused the crier to proclaim, that he had good neighbours. How comes one then to purchase hell at so dear a rate as the price of his soul, having such cursed neighbours, where all will abhor him? Their disquietness and ranting will be insufferable; and the very sight and ugliness of them will affright and astonish him.

How grievous is the banishment into that place, where none wishes well unto another? where the fathers hate their sons, and the sons abhor their fathers; where the son shall say unto the father, "Cursed be thou, father, for all eternity; because, by an unjust inheritance, thou hast been the cause of my damnation:" and the father shall answer him, "Cursed be thou, son; for, to the end I might leave thee a rich inheritance, I stuck not to gain it by unjust means."

In other banishments, when parents or friends meet in a country far from home, they endeavour to comfort one another, and even enemies are then reconciled; but in this banishment of hell, friends abhor friends, and parents hate, and are hated by their children.

To this may be added, that, in this banishment of the damned, the exiles are not allowed the liberty of other banished persons, who, within the isle or region of relegation, may go or move whither they please; but not so the damned in hell, because the place of their exile is also a prison, a horrid and stinking prison, wherein many millions of souls shall for ever lie fettered in chains; for chains, or something answerable unto them, shall not there be wanting. Whereupon it is observed by the learned, that the wicked spirits shall be fastened to fire, or certain fiery bodies, from which the pains which they shall receive, shall be incredible; being thereby deprived of their natural liberty, as it were fettered with manacles and bolts, so as they are not able to remove from that place of misery[e]. It were a great torment to have burning irons cast upon our hands and feet; but this, and much more, shall be in hell, where those fiery

[e] August. de Civitat. Dei, lib. i. c. 10. Less. de Perfect. Divin. lib. xviii. c. 30.

bodies, which are to serve instead of shackles and fetters, are to be of terrible forms, proportionable unto their offences, and shall, with their very sight, affright them.

Besides, the bodies of the damned, after the final judgment past, shall be so straitened and crowded together in that infernal dungeon, that the holy Scripture compares them to grapes in the wine-press, which press one another till they burst. Most barbarous was that torment inflicted upon some unfortunate persons: they put certain rings of iron, stuck full of sharp points of needles, about their arms and feet, in such manner, as they could not move without pricking and wounding themselves; then they compassed them about with fire, to the end that standing still they might be burnt alive; and if they stirred, the sharp points pierced their flesh with more intolerable pains than the fire. What shall then be the torment of the damned, where they shall burn eternally without dying, and without possibility of removing from the place designed them? where whatsoever they touch, shall be fire and sulphur, into which their bodies at the latter day shall be plunged. Neither shall unsavoury smells, so proper unto prisons, be wanting in that infernal dungeon: for, first, that fire of sulphur, being pent in without vent or respiration, shall send forth a poisonous scent; and if a match of brimstone be offensive here, what shall such a mass of that stuff be in hell? Secondly, the bodies of the damned shall cast forth a most horrible stink of themselves, and that more or less, according to the quality of their sins.

Actiolinus the tyrant (as Paulus Jovius writes) had many prisons full of torments, miseries, and ill smells; insomuch as men took it for a happiness rather to die than to be imprisoned, because being loaded with irons, afflicted with hunger, and poisoned with the pestilential smell of those who died in prison, and were not suffered to be removed, they came to end in a slow, but most cruel death. But what were those prisons to that of hell, in respect of which they may be esteemed as paradise, full of jessamine and lilies.

Whatsoever misery was suffered in Actiolinus's prison, was in this regard tolerable, because it was of no long continuance, being to last no longer than a short life, and quite vanishing away at the hour of death: but this prison of the damned is void of all comfort; the torments thereof are

intolerable, because they are eternal. Death cannot enter in there, neither can those that are entered, get out again: but they shall be tormented for evermore, for evermore! What a fearful thing is this? They shall be tormented for evermore!

If one were cast into some deep dungeon, without clothes, exposed to the inclemency of the cold and moisture of the place, where he should not see the light of heaven; should have nothing to feed on, but once a day some little piece of hard barley-bread; and that he were to continue there six years without speaking or seeing of any body; and not to sleep on other bed but the cold ground; what a misery were this! One week of that habitation would appear longer than a hundred years. Yet compare this with what shall be in the banishment and prison of hell, and you shall find the miserable life of that man to be an happiness; there, in all his troubles, he should not meet with any to scoff at his misfortune; none to torment, and whip him; but in hell he shall find both; the devils shall not cease to deride, whip, and cruelly torment him: there should be no horrid sights, no fearful noises of howlings, groanings, and lamentations; in hell the eyes and ears of the damned shall never be free from such affrights: there should be no flames of fire to scorch him; in hell they shall burn into his bowels: there he might move and walk; in hell, not stir a foot: there he may breathe the air without stink; in hell he shall suck in nothing but flames, stink, and sulphur: there he might hope for coming forth; in hell there is no redemption: there that little piece of hard bread would seem every day a dainty; but in hell, in millions of years, his eyes shall not behold a crumb of bread, nor a drop of water, but shall eternally rage with hunger and a burning thirst: this is to be the calamity of that land of darkness.

THE PRAYER.

O Divine Eternity, O Eternal Divinity, who hast in thy hands the extremities of the earth, and who keepest the keys of eternal life and death; I am in thy hands, as clay in the hands of the potter; dispose of me as thou pleasest; I love thee entirely; I cannot love thee more, if I had the

whole universe to boot; for all that which is out of thee, my God, and is not God, is as nothing to me. I love not Paradise itself, but because thou, my God, art there beloved; I know not how to love the Paradise of God, but only the God of Paradise: and I put no less rate upon the Calvary, where my Saviour was crucified, than the heaven, where he is glorified. O my God, thou art he whom I seek for, to thee only it is that I aspire; yet henceforth I will not so much love the eternity of God, as the God of eternity, though it be the same eternity, and that same eternity be God himself: to whom be glory, and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Slavery and Pains Eternal.

The slavery of the damned in hell is such, that all their senses, and powers of soul and body, are subject unto eternal pains and torments; with their touch, they are to serve that burning and never-consuming fire; with their taste, hunger and thirst; with their smell, stink; with their sight, those horrid and monstrous shapes which the devils shall assume; with their hearing, scorns and affronts; with their imagination, horror; with their will, loathsomeness and detestation; with their memory, despair; with their understanding, confusion; with such a multitude of other punishments, as they shall want eyes to weep for them.

Ælian writes of Trizus the tyrant, that he commanded his subjects not to speak together; and when they used signs, instead of words, he also forbade those; whereupon the afflicted people met in the market-place at least to weep for their misfortunes, but neither was that permitted: greater shall be the rigour in hell, where they shall neither be suffered to speak a word of comfort, nor move hand or foot, nor ease their hearts with weeping. Jeremias the prophet lamented with floods of tears, that Jerusalem, which was the queen of nations, should be made a slave and tributary: what tears are sufficient to lament the damnation of a poor soul,

who, from an heir and prince of the kingdom of heaven, hath made himself a slave to the devil, and those eternal punishments in hell, unto which he is to pay as many tributes as he hath senses, powers, and members.

As the slaves of the earth are whipped and punished by their masters, so the slaves of hell are tormented by the devils, who have power and dominion over them: children, as slaves, are whipped and chastised by their masters, so the tormentors, making the damned as their slaves, lay upon them a thousand afflictions, griefs, and miseries: every member of their body shall suffer greater pain and torment, than if it were torn from the body. If one cannot tell how to suffer a tooth-ach, head-ach, or the pain of the cholic, what will it be when there shall not be any joint, or the least part of the body, which shall not cause him an intolerable pain? Not only the head, or teeth, but also the breasts, sides, shoulders, the back, the heart, and all the parts of the body, even to the very bones and marrow. Who can express the number and greatness of their torments, since all their powers and senses, soul and body, are to suffer in a most violent manner? Besides this, every sense from his particular object shall receive a particular punishment.

The eyes shall not only be grieved with a scorching heat, but shall be tormented with monstrous and horrible figures: many are affrighted very much, passing through a church-yard, only for fear of seeing a fantasm; in what a fright will be a miserable damned soul, which shall see so many, and of so horrid shapes? Their sight also shall be tormented with beholding the punishment of their friends and kindred. Hegesippus writes, that Alexander, the son of Hyrcanus, resolving to punish certain persons with exemplary rigour, caused eight hundred to be crucified; and whilst they were yet alive, caused their wives and children to be murdered before their eyes; that so they might die not once, but many deaths. This rigour shall not be wanting in hell, where fathers shall see their sons, and brothers their brothers tormented. The torment of the eyes shall be also very great, in regard that those which have given others scandal, and made others fall into sin, shall see themselves, and those others, in that abyss of torments. To the sight of those dreadful apparitions shall be added the horror, and fe[illegible]

darkness of the place. The darkness of Egypt was said to be horrible, because there the Egyptians beheld fearful figures, and fantasms, which terrified them. In the like manner, in that infernal darkness, the eyes shall be tormented with the monstrous figures of the wicked spirits, which shall appear much more dreadful, by reason of the obscurity and sadness of that eternal night.

The hearing shall not only be afflicted by an intolerable pain, caused by that ever burning and penetrating fire, but also with the fearful and amazing noises of thunders, howlings, clamours, groans, curses, and blasphemies. Sylla, being dictator, caused six thousand persons to be enclosed in the circus; and then appointing the senate to meet in a temple close by, where he intended to speak unto them about his own affairs, to strike the greater terror into them, and make them know he was their master, he gave order, that, so soon as he began his oration, the soldiers should kill this multitude of people, which was effected: upon which were heard such lamentations, outcries, groans, clashing of armour, and blows of those merciless homicides, that the senators could not hear a word, but stood amazed with terror of so horrid a fact. What shall be the harmony of hell, where the ears shall be deafened with the cries and complaints of the damned? What confusion and horror shall it breed, to hear all lament, all complain, all curse and blaspheme, through the bitterness of the torments which they suffer?

But the damned shall principally be affrighted, and shall quake to hear the thunder-clap of the wrath of God, which shall continually resound in their ears! "Whereas the just," saith the royal prophet, "shall be in the eternal memory of God, and shall not fear the dreadful crack of his wrath."

The smell shall also be tormented with a most pestilential stink. Horrible was that torment used by Mezentius, to tie a living body to a dead, and there to leave them, until the infection and putrified exhalations of the dead had killed the living. What can be more abominable, than for a living man to have his mouth laid close to that of a dead one, full of grubs and worms, where the living must receive all those pestilential vapours, breathed forth from a corrupt carcass, and suffer such loathsomeness and abominable stink? But what is this in respect of hell, when each body of the damned

is more loathsome and unsavoury than a million of dead dogs, and all those pressed and crowded together in so strait a compass? Bonaventure goes so far as to say, that if one only of the damned were brought into this world, it were sufficient to infect the whole earth. Neither shall the devils send forth a better smell; for although they are spirits, yet those fiery bodies, unto which they are fastened and confined, shall be of a more pestilential savour.

Hell is the world's sink, and the receptacle of all the filth in this great frame, and withal a deep dungeon, where the air hath no access. How great must the stink and infection needs be of so many corruptions heaped one upon another! and how insufferable the smell of that infernal brimstone, mixed with so many corrupted matters! O gulf of horror! O infernal grave! without vent or breathing place! Eternal grave of such as die continually and cannot die, with what abominable filth art thou not filled!

What shall I then say of the tongue, which is the instrument of so many ways of sinning, flattery, lying, murmuring, and calumniating, gluttony, and drunkenness. Who can express that bitterness, which the damned shall suffer, greater than that of aloes or wormwood? The Scripture tells us, the gall of dragons shall be their wine; and they shall taste the poison of asps for all eternity, unto which shall be joined an intolerable thirst, and dog-like hunger: conformable to which David said, "they shall suffer hunger, as dogs." Famine is the most pressing of all necessities, and most deformed of all evils; plagues and wars are happinesses in respect of it. If, then, a famine of eight days be the worst of temporal evils, what shall that famine be which is eternal? Let our epicures hear what the Son of God prophesies: "Wo unto you who are full[a];" for you shall be an hungered, and with such an hunger as shall be eternal. Hunger in this life doth bring men to such extremity, that not only they come to desire to eat dogs, cats, rats, and mice, but also mothers come to eat their own children, and men the flesh of their own arms, as it fell out to Zeno the emperor. If hunger be so terrible a mischief in this life, how will it afflict the damned in the other! Without all doubt, the damned would

[a] Luke, vi.

rather tear themselves in pieces than suffer it; all the most horrible famines, that Scripture histories propose unto us, are but weak pictures to that which the damned suffer in this unfortunate residence of eternal miseries; neither shall thirst torment them less.

The sense of touching, as it is the most extended sense of all the rest, so it shall be the most tormented in that burning fire; all the torments which the Scripture doth exhibit to us, as prepared for the reprobate, seem to fall upon this only sense: "They shall pass," saith Job, "from extremity of cold to intolerable heats," whole floods of fire and brimstone, which shower down upon those unfortunate wretches; all this belongs unto the sense of touching. We are amazed to think of the inhumanity of Phalaris, who roasted men alive in his brazen bull: this was a joy in respect of that fire of hell, which penetrates the very entrails of the body without consuming them. The burning of a finger only does cause so great a torment, that it is insufferable; but far greater were it to burn the whole arm; and far greater were it, besides the arms, to burn the legs; and far more violent torment would it be to burn the whole body. This torment is so great that it cannot be expressed, since it comprises as many torments as the body of man hath joints, sinews, arteries, &c. and especially being caused by that penetrating and real fire, of which this temporal fire is but a painted fire in respect of that in hell.

Amongst all the torments which human justice hath invented for the punishment of crimes, there is none held more rigorous than that of fire, by reason of the great activity of that element. What shall the heat of that fire be, which shall be the executioner of the justice of the God of vengeance! whose zeal shall be inflamed against the wicked, and shall kindle the fire, which shall eternally burn in the extremities of hell! Such are the torments and miseries of hell, that if all the trees in the world were put in one heap, and set on fire, I would rather burn there till the day of judgment, than suffer, only for the space of one hour, that fire of hell. What a miserable unhappiness will it be, to burn in those flames of hell, not only for an hour, but till the day of judgment! yea, even for all eternity, and world without end! Who would not esteem it an hideous torment, if

he were to be burnt alive an hundred times, and his torment was to last every time for the space of an hour, with what compassionate eyes would all the world look upon such a miserable wretch! Nevertheless, without all doubt, any of the damned in hell would receive this as a great happiness to end his torments with those hundred times burning: for what comparison is there betwixt an hundred hours burning, with some space of time betwixt every hour, and to burn an hundred years of continual torment! And what comparison will there be betwixt burning for an hundred years' space, and to be burning without interruption, as long as God is God!

Who can express the strange and horrible confusion which shall inhabit the appetite of these wretched creatures? If all the disorders of man's life spring from his passions, what disorder must those miserable souls needs feel in that part, what convulsions, what rage, what fury? Alas! that noble passion, love, the queen of all the rest, the sun of life, that passion which might have made them happy for ever, if they had turned it towards God; that amiable object being razed out of them, the perpetual aversion they have to love shall eternally afflict them, the passion of hatred shall be outrageous in the damned, whence shall proceed their continual blasphemies against God, and the perpetual curses, and imprecations, which they shall make against the creatures; and if they have any desires, they shall be desirous to see all the world partaker of their pains; their aversion from all good shall be as much tormenting, as in itself it is execrable: of joy there must no mention be made in that place of dolour; but contrariwise of incredible sadness, which shall oppress them without any consolation. The heat of anger shall redouble the heat of their flames; hope banished from their hearts shall leave the place void to despair, which shall be one of their fiercest tormentors. And though their bodies be within hell's bosom, yet shall they bear about them another hell in their own bosoms.

Consider now, my soul, whether thou art able to live in this devouring fire, whether thou wilt make choice of thy habitation in eternal flames. This fire is prepared for the devil and his angels; consider whether thou wilt enter in to this cursed crew, and take part of the dregs of their chalice.

There is no medium; either thou must forsake thy sins, or else thou must be given up a prey to this eternal torment. I doubt not, thou wilt make a happy choice; and, to escape so dangerous a gulf, cast thyself into the arms of Divine mercy, which only admits the penitent, and say thus: "O great God, who art a consuming fire, and makest the fire of thy Divine justice issue from amongst the thorns, to burn the tallest cedars in Lebanon; let the fire, which walks before thee as executioner of thy justice, never depart from our memory; may it be unto us a pillar of light in the darkness of our errors, a lamp unto our feet, and a lantern to our ways, whereby we may discover this infernal gulf, which is ready to swallow us up. Thou, O Lord, who didst deliver the three children out of the Babylonian furnace, preserve us from those eternal flames, and exempt us from the burning ones of thy wrath; place us in the light and bright one of thy love, where, like Pyratides and sacred Salamanders, we shall live happy, without pain or torment, singing honour, praise, and benediction unto thee, our God, for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAP. VIII.

The Pains of the Powers of a damned Soul.

THE imagination shall afflict those miserable offenders, increasing the pains of the senses by the liveliness of its apprehension: if, in this life, the imagination is sometimes so vehement, that it hurts more than real evils; in the other, the torment which it causes will be excessive. Baptista Fulgosus recounts, as an eye-witness, that being a judge in a duel, one of the competitors made the other fly, but instantly fell down dead himself, without any other cause than an imagination that he was hurt to death; for he neither received wound or blow, neither was the sign of any found upon his dead body. If, in this life, the imagination be so powerful in men who are in health, as to cause a sense of pain, where none hurts; grief, where none molests; and death, where none kills; what shall it be in hell, where so

many devils punish and afflict with torments, preserving only life, that the pain of death may live eternally? And if we see some timorous people with an imaginary fear tremble and remain half dead, there is no doubt but the imagination of those miserable persons, joined with the horror of the place where they are, will cause a thousand pains and torments.

Frame a judgment of it, by that which happens to such, as in this life, finding themselves guilty of grievous crimes, fear to fall into temporal justice: they may indeed sometimes be in a secure place, but never in security: they may be hid from the eyes of men, and be placed out of their reach; but never shall they be able to hide themselves from themselves, or escape the assault of their own consciences. While they wake, they are tortured with fears and suspicions; their sleep is interrupted with wicked dreams; dread doth still follow them; at each one's approach they quake with fear, and the furies, having seized upon them, grant them neither peace nor truce; their troubled thoughts put their hearts upon the rack. Now, if the apprehension of human justice, which hath power only over the body, gives so dreadful alarms to the imagination, what will the sense of the darts of the Divine justice do, which are so many instruments of death, and burning arrows shot at the damned souls?

The will shall be tormented with an eternal abhorring and rage against itself, against all creatures, and against God, the Creator of all; and shall, with an intolerable sadness, anger, grief, and disorder of all the affections, violently desire things impossible, and despair of all that is good. If joy consists in the possession of what one loves, and pain in the want of that which is desired, and being necessitated to what is abhorred; what greater pain and torment, than to be ever desiring that which shall never be enjoyed, and ever abhorring that which we can never be quit of? That which he desires, he shall never obtain, and what he desires not, eternally suffer; and from hence shall spring that raging fury which David speaks of: "The sinner shall see, and be raging; he shall gnash his teeth, and be consumed." This rage and madness shall be increased by the despair which shall be joined unto it, which must needs be most terrible unto the damned: for as the greatest evil is eased by hope,

so the least is made grievous by despair. Hope in afflictions is supported by two things; one is, the fruit which may result from suffering; the other is, the end and conclusion of the evil suffered: but in regard the despair of the damned is of so great evils, the despair itself will be a most horrible one.

If one suffers and reaps fruit by it, it is a comfort unto him, and the grief is recompensed by the joy of the benefit thereof; but when the suffering is without fruit or profit, then it comes to be heavy indeed: the hope of a good harvest makes the labourer with cheerfulness endure the toil of ploughing and sowing; but if he were certain to reap no profit, every pace he moved would be grievous and irksome unto him. Though in temporal afflictions this hope of recompense should fail, yet the hope that they should sometimes cease and have an end, would afford some comfort and ease unto the sufferers: but in hell both those are wanting; the damned shall never receive reward for their sufferings, nor shall their torments ever have an end.

O let us consider how great a recompense attends the least of our sufferings here in God's service; and how vain and unprofitable shall all our sufferings be hereafter: here some few penitent ejaculations may gain eternal glories, there the most intense pains and torments, both in soul and body, cannot deserve a drop of cold water, nor so much ease as to turn from one side to the other. In this raging despair end the vain hopes of sinners: hell is full of those who hoped they should never enter into it, and full of those who despair of getting out of it; they offended with a presumptuous hope they should not die in sin, and that proving false, are fallen into eternal desperation; there is no hope can excuse the falling into so great a danger. Let us therefore secure heaven, and not sin.

The memory shall be another cruel tormentor of those miserable sinners, converting all they have done, good or bad, into torments: the good, because they have lost their reward; the bad, because they have deserved their punishment: the delights also which they have enjoyed, and all the happiness of this life, in which they have triumphed, (seeing that for them they fell into this misery,) shall be a sharp sword which shall pierce their hearts; they shall be

full of affliction, when they shall compare the shortness of their past pleasures with the eternity of their present torments. What groans, what sighs, will they pour out, when they see that those delights, which hardly lasted an instant, and that the pains they suffer for them, shall last for ages and eternities; all that is past, appearing but as a dream. Let us tremble at the pleasures and felicity of this life, since they may turn into arsenic or wormwood. The miserable wretch shall, with great grief, remember, how often he might have gained heaven, and did not, but is now tumbled into hell; and shall say unto himself, "How many times might I have prayed, and spent that time in play; but now I pay for it? How many times ought I to have fasted, and left it, to satisfy my greedy appetite? How many times might I have given alms, and spent it in sin? How many times might I have pardoned my enemies, and chose rather to be revenged? How many times might I have frequented the sacraments, and forbore them, because I would not quit the occasion of sinning? There never wanted means of serving God, but I never made use of them, and am, therefore, justly paid for all. Behold, wretched soul, that, entertaining thyself in pleasures, thou hast for toys and fooleries lost heaven. If thou wouldest, thou mightest have been a companion for angels; if thou wouldest, thou mightest have been in eternal joy, and thou hast left all for the pleasure of a moment. 'O accursed and miserable creature, thy Redeemer courted thee with heaven, and thou despisedst him for a base trifle. This was thy fault, and now thou sufferest for it; and since thou wouldest not be happy with God, thou shalt now be eternally cursed by him and his angels.'"

The understanding shall torment itself with discourses of great bitterness, discoursing of nothing but what may grieve it. Aristotle shall not then take delight in his wisdom, nor Seneca comfort himself with his philosophy; Galen shall find no remedy in his physic, nor the profoundest scholar in his divinity.

Besides these miseries and calamities, in this power of the soul is engendered the worm of conscience; which is so often proposed unto us in holy Scripture, as a most terrible torment, and greater than that of fire. Only in one sermon, Christ, our Redeemer, three times menaces us "with that worm

which gnaws the consciences, and tears in pieces the hearts of the damned;" admonishing us often, "that their worm shall never die, nor their fire be quenched." For as the worm which breeds in dead flesh, or that which breeds in woods, eats and gnaws that substance of which they are engendered; so the worm, which is bred from sin, is in perpetual enmity with it, gnawing and devouring the heart of the sinner, with raging and desperate grief; still putting him in mind, that, by his own fault, he lost that eternal glory, which he might so easily have obtained, and is now fallen into eternal torments, from whence there is no redemption. And, certainly, this resentment of the loss of heaven shall more torment him, than the fire of hell: it is a hell in hell, worse than a thousand hells.

Certainly it were a great rigour, if a father should be forced to be present at the execution of his son; but more, if he should be compelled to be the hangman; and yet greater, if the gallows should be placed before his own door, so that he could neither go in nor out without beholding the affront: but far greater cruelty, if they should make the guilty person to execute himself, and that by cutting his body in pieces, member after member, or tearing off his flesh with his own teeth. This is the cruelty and torment of an evil conscience, with which a sinner is racked and tortured amongst those eternal flames, not being able to banish his faults from his memory; nor their punishment from his thoughts: the envy, also, which they shall bear towards those who have gained heaven, by as small matters as they have lost it, shall much add to their grief. Those who are hungry, if they see others, meaner than they, feed at some splendid and plentiful table, and cannot be admitted themselves, become more hungry; so shall it fare with the damned, who shall be more afflicted by beholding others sometime less than themselves, enjoy that eternal happiness, which they, through want of care, are deprived of. What lamentations shall the damned send forth, when they shall see that the just have gained the benediction of God, and that they lost it through their own neglect?

After all this, there shall not want in hell the pains of death, which amongst human punishments is the greatest; that of hell is a living death. The death which men give, together with death, takes away the pain and sense of dying;

but the eternal death of sinners is with sense; and by so much greater, as it hath more of life, recollecting within itself the worst of dying, which is to perish; and the most intolerable of life, which is to suffer pain. In hell there shall be, unto the miserable, a death without death, and an end without end; for their death shall ever live, and their end shall never begin.

See how the rack compels them, at length, to confess the truth. What hath pride profited us? What advantage have we gotten by the vanity of riches? All that is past as a shadow, as a ship sailing on the sea under full sails, leaving behind her no marks of her passage; as a bird flying in the air, whose trace is not found. So have our days run by, without having any mark of virtue; we have spent in malice all the time, which was liberally bestowed upon us, "to work out our salvation in fear and trembling;" we have passed the course of our age in appearances, and in the vanities and follies of the world; and in an instant we are fallen into hell. In this sort do those wretches, gnawn with a continual sorrow, unprofitably repent themselves, and groan under the pressure and affliction of heart, which is the hell of their hell.

Even here, amongst us, if there should be a condition, in which we might be sensible but of some part of that which death brings along with it, it would be esteemed a greater evil than death itself. Who doubts, but if one, after burial, should find himself alive and sensible under the earth, where he could speak with nobody, see nothing but darkness, hear nothing but those who walk above him, smell nothing but the rotten stink of their bodies, eat nothing but his own flesh, nor feel any thing but the earth which oppresses him, or the cold pavement of the vault where he lay; who doubts, I say, but that this estate were worse than to be wholly dead, since life only served to feel the pain of death? What sepulchre is more terrible than that of hell, which is eternally shut upon those who are in it, where the miserable damned remain, not only under the earth, but under fire, having sense for nothing but to feel death, darkness, and pain? This death of hell may be called a double death, in respect it contains both the death of sin, and the death of pain; those unfortunate wretches standing condemned, never to be freed from the death of sin, and for ever to be tormented with

death of pain. There is no greater death than that of the soul, which is sin; in which the miserable are to continue whilst God is God, with that infinite evil, and that ugly deformity, which sin draws along with it; which is worse than to suffer that eternal fire, which is but the punishment of it. After sin, what pains should there be greater, than that of sin itself? Who trembles not with the only memory, that he is to die, remembering that he is to cease to be; that the feet, whereon he walks, are no more to bear him; that his hands are no more to serve him, nor his eyes to see? Why then do we not tremble at the thought of hell, in respect of which the first death is no punishment, but a reward and happiness; there being no damned in hell, but would take that death, which we here inflict for offences, as an ease of his pains? They shall desire death, and death shall fly from them; for unto all their evils and miseries, this, as the greatest, is adjoined, that neither they nor it shall ever die. This circumstance of being eternal, doth much augment the torments of hell. Let us suppose, that one had but a gnat that should sting his right hand, and a wasp at the left; and that one foot should be pricked with a thorn, and the other with a pin: if this only were to last for ever, it would be an intolerable pain. What will it then be, when hands, feet, arms, head, and all the members, are to burn for all eternity? They shall always burn, but never to be consumed; they shall seek for death in the flames, but shall not find it. Therefore, justly doth one cry out, "O, woe eternal, that never shall have end! O end without end! O death, more grievous than all death; always to die, and never to be quite dead."

The torments in hell are so many in number, that they cannot be numbered; so long in continuance, that they cannot be measured; so grievous for quality, that they cannot be endured; but with such infinite pain, that every minute of an hour shall seem a whole year. "O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy displeasure: unless thou wilt have mercy, O God, I must needs perish." In this life we have hope for our comforter, in all distresses; which hath a sovereign virtue, to mitigate all pains and sorrows. And God, of his great mercy, for the most part, in all adversities, still leaveth a man some hope of help and succour.

The sick man, as long as he lives, he still lives in hope; as long as there is life, there is hope; but after this life endeth, there remaineth to the damned no more any hope of comfort: hope, the last comforter of all, taketh her flight, and eternal desperation seizeth upon them.

If an angel should promise thee to be made an emperor, so you would lie in your bed one night in the same posture, looking upwards towards heaven, without moving or turning yourself all night; if you have a mind to turn on one side, it will be a trouble to you not to do it, and you will persuade yourself, that you never lay so uneasy in your whole life before; and will say unto yourself, 'My bed is good and soft, I am well, what is wanting to me? Nothing is wanting, but only to turn me from one side to the other.' How comes this to pass, that thou canst not rest one single night; it being such a torture to be still, without turning thyself? What would it be, if thou wert to remain in one posture three or four nights? Thou hast little patience, since a thing so small doth grieve thee; what would it be if thou hadst the colic, or wert tormented with the stone or sciatica? Far greater evils than these are prepared for thee in hell, whither thou postest, by running into so many sins. Consider what a couch is prepared for thee in that abyss of misery; what feather-bed; what Holland sheets! Thou shalt be cast upon burning coals, flames and sulphur shall be thy coverlets. Mark well, whether this bed be for one night only. Yea, nights, days, months, and years, for ages and eternities, thou art to remain on that side thou fallest on, without having the least relief to turn thyself unto the other. That fire shall never die, neither shalt thou ever die, to the end its torments may last eternally. After an hundred years, add after a hundred thousand of millions of years, they shall be as lively and as vigorous as at the first day. See what thou dost, by not fearing eternal death; by making no account of eternity; by setting so much of thy affection on a temporal life. Thou dost not walk the right way: change thy life, and begin to serve thy Creator.

THE PRAYER.

Blessed Lord, eternal God, my heart is naked and open before thee; I send up my sighs, as humble orators before

thee. I know not what to ask, nor how; only this one thing I beg at thy hands, that thou wilt not suffer me to die an eternal death. Correct me here as thy child, that I may be saved hereafter. Lord, thou knowest that I love thee; and that I desire to be with thee, that I may sing eternal praises unto thee. Lord, have mercy upon me, and grant me my request, for thy great mercy's sake.

CHAP. IX.

The Fruit which may be drawn from the Consideration of Eternal Evils.

All which hath been said of the pains in hell, is far short of that which really they are. There is great difference betwixt the knowledge we have by relation, and that which we learn by experience. The Maccabees knew, that the temple of the Lord was already profaned and destroyed; they had heard of it, and lamented it. But when they saw with their eyes the sanctuary lie desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burnt, there was then no measure of their tears; they tore their garments, cast ashes upon their heads, threw themselves upon the ground, and their complaints ascended as high as heaven. If, then, the relation and discourse of the pains of hell make us tremble; what shall be the sight and experience? The consideration of what hath been said, may help us to form some conception of the terror and horror of that place of eternal sorrow. Let us descend into hell whilst we live, that we may not descend there when we are dead. Let us draw some fruit from thence, during our lives, from whence nothing but torment is to be had after death.

The principal fruit which may be drawn from that consideration, are these. In the first place, an ardent love and sincere gratitude towards our Creator; that having so often deserved hell, he hath not yet suffered us to fall into it. How many be there now in hell, who for their first mortal sin, and only for that one, have been sent thither? and we, notwithstanding the innumerable sins which we have committed, are yet spared. What did God find in us, that he should use a mercy towards us for so many sins, which he

did not afford to others for so few? Why are we not then more grateful for so many benefits, which we have no ways deserved? How grateful would a damned person be, if God should free him from those flames, wherein he is tormented, and place him in the same condition we now are! What a life would he lead, and how grateful would he be unto so merciful a Benefactor! He hath done no less for us, but much more; for if he hath not drawn us out of hell, he hath not thrown us into it, as we deserved: which is the greater favour? Tell me, if a creditor should cast that debtor into prison, who owed him a thousand ducats, and after the enduring of much affliction, at last release him; or should suffer another, who owed fifty thousand ducats, to go up and down free, without touching a thread of his garment; whether of the debtors received the greater benefit? I believe thou wilt say, 'The latter.' More, then, are we indebted to God almighty; and, therefore, ought to serve him better. Consider how a man would live, who should be restored to life, after he had been in hell. Thou shouldest live better, since thou art more indebted to almighty God.

Secondly: We are taught to exercise our patience, in suffering the afflictions and troubles of this life; that, by enduring of these thankfully, we may escape those of the other. He who shall consider the eternity of those torments, which he deserves, will not be troubled at the pains of this life, how bitter soever. There is no state or condition upon earth, how miserable soever, which the damned would not endure, and think it an infinite happiness, if they might change with it; neither is there any course of life so unhappy, which he, who had once experienced those burning flames, if he might live again, would not willingly undergo. He, who hath once deserved eternal torments, let him never murmur against the crosses and petty injuries offered him in this life. If thou goest into a bath, and shalt find it excessive hot, think on hell. If thou art tormented with the heat of some violent fever, pass unto the consideration of those eternal flames, which burn without end; and think, that if a bath or calenture so afflict, how shalt thou endure that river of fire? When thou shalt see any thing great in this present life, think presently of the kingdom of heaven, and so thou shalt not value it much; and when thou shalt see any thing terrible,

think on hell, and thou wilt not be much moved. When the desire of any temporal thing shall afflict thee, think that the pleasure of it is of no estimation; if the fear of laws, which are enacted here upon earth, be of that force, that they are able to deter us from evil actions; much more ought the thoughts of eternal pain to affright us. If we often think of hell, we shall never fall into it.

We ought often to call to mind the evils of the next life, that we may the more despise the pleasures of this; because temporal felicity uses often to end in eternal misery. All that is precious in this world, honour, wealth, fame, pleasure, all the splendour of the earth, is but a shadow, if we compare the small duration of them with the eternity of those torments in the other world.

Put all the silver in the world together in one heap; all the gold, all the precious stones, diamonds, emeralds, with all other the richest jewels; all the triumphs of the Romans, all the rarities and dainties of the Assyrians, &c. all would deserve to be of no other value than dirt, if to be possessed with hazard of falling at last into the pit of hell. Let us call to mind that sentence of our blessed Saviour: "What will it avail a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his soul?" If they should make us lords and masters, I say, not of great wealth, but of the whole world, we should not admit of it with the least hazard of being damned for ever. Let one enjoy all the contents and regales imaginable; let him be raised to the highest pitch of honour; let him triumph with all the greatness in the world. All this is but a dream, if, after this mortal life, he finds himself at length plunged into hell fire.

You may look upon a wheel of squibs and fire-works, which, whilst it moves, casts forth a thousand lights and splendours, with which the beholders are much taken; but all, at last, ends in a little smoke and burnt paper. So it is, whilst the wheel of felicities was in motion, according to the style of St. James; that is to say, whilst our life lasts, its fortune and prosperity appears most glorious; but ceasing, all comes to end in smoke, and he that fares best in it, at last finds himself plunged into hell.

When a fever, or some great unexpected change in a man's estate, happens to him, it makes him to forget all his

former contents in health and wealth; his sickness and adversity so taking up the whole man, as that he hath no leisure to employ his thoughts upon any thing else; and if, perhaps, any passage of his former condition chance to come to his mind, it gives him no satisfaction, but rather augments his pain; wherefore if temporal evils, though very short, are sufficient to make former felicities of many years vanish; what impression will temporal goods make in us, if we employ our thoughts upon eternal evils? Besides those torments, which are to be suffered hereafter without profit, may move in us to husband the short time of this life most to our advantage: how many miserable souls now suffer those eternal pains, for not employing one day in the service of God? What would a damned soul give for one quarter of an hour out of so many days and years which are lost, and shall not have one instant allowed him? Thou, who now livest and hast time, lose not that which imports thee so much, and once lost can never be recovered. O miserable creatures! who, for having lost a short space of time, lose an eternity of felicity; they come to know too late the importance of that which they have lost, and shall never come to regain it; let us now make use of that time, whilst we may gain eternity, and let us not lose that with pleasure, which cannot be recovered with grief.

Lastly, let us draw, from the consideration of hell, a perfect hatred to all mortal sin, since from the evil of sin proceeds that evil of pain: terrible is the evil of sin, since it cannot be satisfied even with eternal flames.

CHAP. X.

The Infinite Guilt of Mortal Sin, by which we lose the Felicity of Heaven, and fall into Eternal Evils.

So foul and horrid is a mortal sin in its own nature, that though it passed only in thought, and none knew it but God, and he who committed it, and which endured no longer than an instant, yet it deserves the torments of hell for all eternity; for by how much greater is the majesty of God, which is

despised, by so much greater is the injury offered him; and therefore as the majesty of God, which is despised by sin, is infinite, so the despite of it must contain, in itself, a certain kind of infinity: by how much greater is the reverence due to a person, by so much greater is the disrespect and affront offered him. And as to God there is due an infinite reverence, so the injury done him is of an inexplicable malice, which by no good works of a mere creature, how many and great soever, can be expiated. So great is the malignity of a mortal sin, that, being put into the balance of Divine justice, it would outweigh all the good works of all the saints, although they were a thousand times more and greater than they are; because the good works with which God is honoured by his saints, although in themselves great in value, yet in respect of God, unto whom they add nothing, and who is nothing bettered by them, they are not valuable; unto whose Divine goodness, not only they, but infinitely more, and greater, are but a debt: but for God to be despised by his creature, who, by infinite titles, is obliged to serve him, and ought to reverence him with an infinite honour, is a thing so highly repugnant to his majesty, that, if God were capable of grief, it would more afflict him, than all the pious actions of the saints content him: certainly, amongst men, the honour which is given to one who deserves it, takes not so much, as a contempt done unto him who merits it not: a king values not much the honour which is given him by his vassals, because he takes it not for a courtesy, but a duty; but to be affronted and scorned by one, especially whom he had favoured with his benefits, sticks near unto his heart; for not only kings, but all men, think honour due unto them, and disrespect an injury. There is no resentment among men so quick as that of dishonour; nor any thing which causes more grief and vexation. If some person of quality should have his hat plucked off from his head in scorn, and receive a dozen of bastinadoes from some base fellow, that affront would not be recompensed, although a thousand should put off their caps to him, and kiss his hand.

By this may appear the irreverence and great incivility towards God in a mortal sin: insomuch as St. Paul calls it "kicking, or spurning, the Son of God;" this is the reason why it was necessary that God should become man, being

the Divine justice could not be appeased with less than the satisfaction of a Divine person: let those, therefore, cease to marvel, that a momentary sin should be punished with eternal torments, who see that, for sin, God was made man, and died for man; and certainly, it is a far greater wonder, that God should die for the sin of another, than that man should, for his own sin, suffer an eternal punishment: and if the malice of sin be so exorbitant, that nothing could satisfy for it less than God; it is nothing strange, that that which hath no limit, nor bound in evil, should have no limit in punishment, but should exceed all time, and be eternal. And if a treason committed against a temporal prince be chastized with loss of life and goods of the traitor, and with the punishment also of his posterity, which, in as much as concerns the prince, is eternal; why should not the offence of a vile worm, against his Creator, be tormented with eternal pains? The greatness of honour decreases and grows less, according to the height and dignity of the person honoured; so as that honour which, done to an ordinary person, would seem excessive, given unto a prince is nothing: and on the contrary, the greatness of an injury rises and grows higher, according to the worth of him who is injured; so as God, who is infinite, being the person offended, deserves that the injury done unto him should be chastised with a punishment equal to the duration of his being, and needs that he, who satisfies for it, should be a person of infinite worth and perfection, voluntarily undertaking to put himself into the sinner's place, and to suffer in his stead.

And as sin is grievous in its own nature, so it is much engreatened by the circumstances which attend it: let us consider who it is that sins; it is a most vile and wretched man, who presumes to lift up his hands against his Creator: and what is man but a vessel of dung, a stink of corruption, and, by birth, a slave of the devil? and yet he dares offend his Maker. An offence against God were more grievous, though from another god (if it were possible) infinite and equal to himself; but that this creature should be so insolent against his omnipotent Lord, is beyond amazement. But what is that which a sinner does, when he offends? It is, according to St. Anselm, an endeavour to pluck the crown from the head of God, and place it upon his own; it is,

according to the apostle, to "crucify again the Lord of life." If any of these things were attempted against a majesty upon earth, it were enough to make the offender's flesh to be plucked off with pincers, to have him torn in pieces with wild horses, to pull down his house, and sow the place with salt, and make his whole lineage infamous. If such an offence were committed by one man against another, betwixt whom the difference is not great, being both equal in nature, it were very heinous; what shall it deserve, being committed against God, the Lord and Creator of all, whose immense greatness is infinitely distant from the nature of his creature? O good God! who is able to express what a sinner doth against thee and himself! He despises thy majesty, razes out thy law from his heart, contemns thy justice, scorns thy threats, despises thy promises, makes a solemn renunciation of thy glory, thou hast promised him; and all to bind himself an eternal slave to Satan, desiring rather to please thine enemy than thee, who art his Father, his Friend, and all his good, desiring rather to die eternally, by displeasing thee, than to enjoy heaven for ever, by serving thee.

Let us now see where, and in what place, a sinner presumes to sin, and be a traitor unto God; it is even in his own world, in his own house; and knowing that his Creator looks upon him, he offends him; if a sin were committed where God could not see it, it were yet an enormous fault; but to do an injury to his Creator, before his face, what an unspeakable impudence is it! If he who sins could go into another world, where God did not inhabit, and there, in secret under the earth, should sin after such a manner, as only himself should know it, yet it were a great boldness; but to sin in his own house, which is this world, what hell doth it not deserve? For a man only to lay his hand upon his sword, in the palace of a king, is capital, and deserves death. For a sinner then, by his sins, to spurn and crucify the Son of God, in the house of his Father, and before his face, what understanding can conceive the greatness of such a malice? And therefore David, with reason, dissolved himself into tears, because he had sinned in the presence of God, and with a grief which pierced his heart, cried out, "I have done evil before thee." Besides this, we not only sin against God in his own house, but even in his arms, whilst we are

upheld by his omnipotence: if there were a son so wicked, who, whilst he was cherished in his mother's bosom, should strike her, and endeavour to kill her, every one would think that a most impious child: how, then, dares man offend God, who sustains, preserves, and hath redeemed him?

The heinousness of this malice in sin is much augmented, by the helps which a sinner uses to effect it; for he turns those very Divine benefits, which he hath received from God, against him who gave them. The sense which men usually have of ingratitude, is most apprehensive; if to forget a benefit be ingratitude, to despise it is an injury; but to use it against the benefactor, I know not what to call it: this does he who sins, making use of those creatures, which God created for his service, to offend him; and converts his Divine benefits into arms against God himself! What could we say, if a king, to honour his soldier, should make him a knight, arm him with his own arms, should gird his sword about him with his own hands, and that the soldier, so soon as he was possessed of the sword, should draw it against the king, and murder him? This wickedness, which seems impossible amongst men, is ordinary in man towards God; who, being honoured so many ways by his Creator, and enriched with so many benefits, as much as in him lies bereaves God of his honour, and desires to bereave him of his life: his understanding, which he received from God, he uses in finding out a way to execute his sin; with his hands he performs it, and, with all his power, offends him who gave them.

But if we shall consider why man does this, it is a circumstance which will amaze us at the malice of it. Why doth a sinner thus offend against his God? Wherefore does he despise his Creator? Wherefore is he a traitor unto the Lord of the world? Wherefore doth he abhor his Redeemer? What reason hath he for so monstrous a wickedness? It is only for a base and filthy pleasure, for a foolish fancy of man, because he will, and no more. O horrid insolence! O mad fury of men, which, without a cause, so grievously offend their Creator; and, by their sins, provoke so good and gracious a God!

The manner also of our sinning would astonish any, who should seriously consider it; it is with so much impudence,

pride, and contempt of God, after having heard so many examples of his chastisements executed upon sinners, after having seen that the most beautiful and glorious of all the angels, and, with him, innumerable others, were thrown from heaven, and made fire-brands in hell, for one sin, and that only in thought; after having seen the first man, for one sin, banished from the Paradise of pleasure, into this valley of tears, despoiled of so many supernatural endowments, and condemned to death; after having known that so many have been damned for their offences; after that the Son of God had suffered upon the cross for our sins; after all this, to sin is an impudence never heard of, and an intolerable contempt of the Divine justice.

Besides, what greater scorn and contempt of God than this; that God, who is worthy of all honour and love, and the devil, who is our professed enemy, pretending both to our souls, the one to save them, the other to torment them in eternal flames, yet we adhere to Satan, and prefer him before Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer; and that so much to our prejudice, as by the loss of eternal glory, and captivating ourselves unto eternal torments and slavery! The manner also of sinning aggravates the sin, as the sinner doth, by losing thereby eternal happiness; though he who sins much, lost nothing, yet the offence against God were great; but well knowing the great damages and punishments likewise that attend sin, and the evident hazard he runs, and yet to sin, is a strange impudence. If we shall consider when it is that we sin, we shall find this circumstance no less to aggravate our offences than the former: because we now sin, when we know that the Son of God was nailed unto the cross, that we should not sin; when we know that God was incarnate for us, humbled himself to be made man, and subjected himself unto death, even the death of the cross, for our redemption: to sin after we had seen God so good and obliging unto us, with those not to be imagined favours, is a circumstance which ought much to be pondered in our hearts, and might make us forbear the offending of so loving a Father. And that Christian, who sins after all this, is to be esteemed worse than a devil; for the devil never sinned against that God, who had shed his blood for him, or who had pardoned so much as one sin of his. When those

sinned who were under the law of nature, they had not seen the Son of God die for their salvation, as a Christian hath; and there is no doubt but Christians will deserve new torments, and greater than those who have not had the knowledge of God, nor received so many benefits from him.

Let us consider about what sin is committed, and we do offend God. It is about complying with a sensual gust, which, in the end, bereaves us of health, of honour, of substance, and even of pleasure itself; suffering many days of grief, for a moment of delight; about things of the earth, which are vile and transitory; and about goods of the world, which are false, short, and deceitful. What would we say, if, for a thing of so small value as a straw, one man should kill another? No more than a straw are all the felicities of the world, in respect of those of heaven; and for a thing of so small consideration, we are traitors to God, and crucify Christ again; and that a thousand times, as often as we sin mortally against him.

Lastly: consider whom we offend; it is God, who is most perfect, most wise, immense, omnipotent, and infinite. We sin against him who infinitely loves us, who suffers us, who heaps his benefits and rewards upon us; to do evil to those who make much of them, even wild beasts abhor it; what is it then for thee to injure him, who loved thee more than himself? Who hath done thee all good, that thou shouldest do no evil? Fear then this Lord, reverence his majesty, love his goodness, and offend him no more. Sin is so evil, that it is every way evil; behold it on every side, it still seems worse. It is not only evil, as it is an injury to God, but it is evil in itself, in its own nature; for if there were no God, or that God were not offended with it, yet it were a most horrid evil, the greatest of all evils, and the cause of all evils. In regard of this deformity and filthiness of sin, the philosophers judged it to be abhorred above all things, and those who denied the immortality of the soul, and the providence of God, affirmed that nothing should make them commit it; and there have been some amongst them who have suffered great extremities to avoid a vicious act: Damocles, as Plutarch writes, chose rather to be boiled in scalding water than to consent to a filthy act; for which reason is Hippo celebrated amongst the Greek matrons, who chose rather to die

than offend. These were Gentiles, who saw not hell open for the punishment of sinners, nor fled from sin because it was an offence unto God, but only for the enormity and filthiness it had in itself: this made them endure prisons and tortures, rather than admit it. What should Christians then do, who know how much sin is offensive to God? Certainly they ought rather to give a thousand lives, than once to injure their Creator by committing an offence, which not only Gentiles, but even nature, hath in horror, which hath planted in brute beasts, although they cannot sin, yet a natural aversion from that which looks like sin.

Pliny admires the force of lightning, which melts the gold and silver, and leaves the purse which contains it, untouched; such is sin, which kills the soul, and leaves the body sound and active; it is a flash of lightning sent from hell, and such leaves the soul which it hath blasted.

Sin, though it were the best thing of the world, yet, for the evil effects it produces, it ought to be avoided more than death; it bereaves the soul of grace, banishes the Holy Ghost, deprives it of the right of heaven; makes him unworthy of Divine protection, and condemns a sinner unto eternal torments in the other world, and in this to many disasters; for there is neither plague, war, famine, nor infirmity of body, whereof sin hath not been in some sort the occasion. And therefore those who weep for their afflictions, let them change the object of their tears, and weep for the cause, which is their sin.

I will therefore from henceforth resolve, that although I were certain that men should not know my sins, and that God would pardon them; yet I will not offend for the very filthiness of sin.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

J. MOYES, GREVILLE STREET, LONDON.

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